

LETTERS
ON THE
PREVALENCE
OF
CHRISTIANITY,
BEFORE ITS
CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT:

WITH
OBSERVATIONS
Gibbon's
ON A LATE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE OF
THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

BY EAST APTHORP, M. A.
VICAR OF CROYDON.

ΑΛΗΘΕΥΟΝΤΕΣ ΕΝ ΑΓΑΠΗ.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR J. ROBSON, BOOKSELLER,
NEW BOND STREET.

M. DCC. LXXVIII.

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OF
CHRISTIANITY
AND
CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT:
WITH
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE OF
THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS

AMSTERSDAMI
LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. KNOX, BOOKSELLER
NEW BOND STREET.
MDCCLXXIII.

P R E F A C E.

IT is with some diffidence that I consent to the publication of this work, which is in every sense imperfect, as well as on account of its literary defects: it being merely introductory to a design of placing the evidence of Christianity in a more obvious light, than that in which it appears in other writers; whose erudition and great abilities have thrown some obscurity on the plainest and most palpable truths, those which depend on facts and historic testimony.

Revealed religion is given as a guide to all who live under its auspicious light. Every one, to whom it is revealed, is at least as able to judge of its evidence, as of its doctrines: and if he takes the gospel as the guide of his life and opinions, he may and ought to know the reasons of his faith

and hope. The proofs of Christianity are addressed to common sense ; and therefore are connected with the most glaring and incontestible facts in the history of mankind. The historic evidence is the true and proper demonstration of the divine truth of the christian religion : and this evidence is of a kind, which admits not of doubt, mistake, or ambiguity. It depends not on the minuter circumstances of historic tradition, in which there is often room for a prudent scepticism ; but on such facts as are evident and certain from the actual state of the world, as well as fully authenticated by all ancient records. For this purpose, the Jewish and Christian revelations were providentially connected with the great revolutions in civil history. Egypt and Phoenicia, Assyria and Babylon, Persia and Greece, were the successive theatres, on which the Jewish Revelation displayed its evidence. The Roman empire, of all the most powerful and civilized that ever existed, was the scene on which the Christian

tian

tian Religion made itself conspicuous. The policy and religions of these sovereignties are eternized in the writings of Gentile Historians, who are unexceptionable witnesses to those revelations of which they were either wholly ignorant, or prejudiced against them. The same writers give unexceptionable accounts of the religions of mankind, not enlightened by revelation: and so ample are those details, that the memoirs of idolatry and polytheism now remaining, would, by their number and variety, baffle the industry of the most learned and diligent collector. The various fortunes of judaism and christianity, thus blended with the affairs of civil government, and opposed to the gentile religions, furnish a proper historical demonstration that the Jewish and Christian religions are what they claim to be, divine revelations.

It is a melancholy, yet a most instructive truth, that the rejection of divine revelation hath been ever attended with signal instances of the divine displeasure. When Pharaoh rejected the miracles of Moses, the courtiers

tiers themselves were forced to exclaim, *dost thou not know, that Egypt is destroyed?* When the Jews revolted from the theocracy, they lost their capital, by far the most illustrious of the cities of the East, and were exiled from their country for seventy years: but when they *crucified the Lord of life*, not even a total excision of their polity could expiate their sin; *His blood is still on them and on their children*. When christianity offered itself to the gentile world; and the Roman empire by sanguinary persecutions aimed at its extirpation: it fell with all its weight on that enormous empire, dismembered it of all its provinces, and crushed it into ruin.

True religion being intended to promote the moral government of God, the object of which is the production of virtue, and of happiness in consequence of virtue; whatever theory tends to diminish the sum of virtue and happiness in the world, can form no part of the divine administration, and of course cannot be true. A religious theory, such as christianity, whose effect is

only

only good, virtue, happiness, must be agreeable to the will of God, and its general utility evinces its truth.

As true christians are the only true patriots; none perhaps, next to apostates, are more pernicious citizens, than such as persist in believing the gospel without obeying it, such as, in the Apostles strong expression, ‘hold the truth in unrighteousness,’

The evidence of revealed religion being inseparably connected with the great political revolutions; and the early fortunes of christianity being constantly influenced by the affairs of the Roman empire; I have stated in this volume, a *single* argument for the truth of christianity, drawn from the religious establishment then subsisting in full force in and beyond that powerful empire. In a continuation of that argument, I have represented the arduous contest sustained by the christian religion against the idolatrous establishment for near four hundred years, and terminated by the triumphant

triumphant subversion of paganism under
Theodosius the Great.

If I shall be thought to have digressed from the argument of this volume, by writing on the study and use of History, and on the causes and effects of the modern Irreligion: the casual manner, in which I was engaged in an undertaking above my force, must be my apology. There seemed a natural connection between a discussion on the utility and study of original historians, and an argument founded on historic evidence. Other things are perhaps still more exceptionable. The air of erudition and literature thrown over these papers will draw some censure; and the writer frankly gives it up as an inconvenience inseparable from the subject; or even as an error, into which he has been misled by his earliest and latest passion, the love of letters, to the right cultivation of which his course of life has been very inauspicious. He recollected his own ignorance in these studies, at a time, when such hints

as

as are here offered, would have been useful to himself: and it is his wish, to put arms into younger hands, who may wield them better in defence of that sacred deposit, with which the ministers of religion are peculiarly intrusted.

- Almost learned and excellent writer, no less respectable for his great merits than his eminent station, hath observed, among other marks of a decline of religious zeal in these lukewarm days; that we do not repel an assault on divine revelation, with that spirit with which it is made, or which becomes the importance of the subject. I should feel myself liable to this imputation; but that I mean to engage in an *amicable conference* with the very learned historian of declining Rome: and I consider his book as furnishing the most useful and convincing topics of evidence. There is no part of that author's disquisitions relating to revealed religion, which does not lead to arguments in favour of it. Master of this interesting controversy,

controversy, he well knows how clearly its advocates have evinced the priority of theism to idolatry ; the necessity of revelation, from the defects of philosophy and the corruptions of polytheism ; the miracles to which we ascribe the prevalence of the gospel ; the injustice of its persecutors, the heroism of its martyrs ; its sanctifying doctrines, its animating hopes. If I presume to go over this field, I shall perhaps evince, that the shining abilities of this author have displayed themselves in making the worse to seem the better cause, in mere compliance with the fashionable prejudice. I am persuaded, that if the question be reconsidered with the attention it deserves ; this very history will convince its *serious* readers of the truth of christianity, by recording its passive triumphs over the tyranny and superstition of the Roman empire.

Though the sequel of this volume, if it should be resumed, is intended to obviate the several objections to primitive christianity advanced in that history ; the
writer

P R E F A C E. xlii

writer thinks himself at liberty, to pursue a more general plan, of stating the evidence of revealed religion: a particular refutation of the most obnoxious parts of MR. GIBBON's history having been so well executed by the learned DR. WATSON, in his elegant and judicious 'Apology for Christianity.'

The reader may collect from several hints in this volume, that the subjects of a second are in some forwardness. In the mean time, I shall be attentive to the censures on this specimen. Should any corrigible faults be pointed out by the candour of criticism, they shall be amended or avoided: should the work be condemned as useless to the great cause of revealed religion, the author will desist from the farther prosecution of his design, and respectfully withdraw from the attention of the public; with this consolation, that his intentions are friendly to society, and that his heart is penetrated with the most devout veneration for the religion of JESUS CHRIST,

CHRIST, as alone productive of public and private felicity; as our only guide in life, our only hope in death, our only refuge in immortality.

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ERRATA.

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| Page | 10—line | 35. | place a period after colentes. |
| 33 | | 8. | for Memmius read L. Mummius. |
| ib. | | 26. | for is read are. |
| 45 | | 10. | prefix the figure 4 to this paragraph. |
| 52 | | 12. | dele, from 'celebrated' to the end of the period. |
| 60 | | 13. | read, examples and writings. |
| 91 | | 30. | for 1771, read 1717. |
| 102 | | 6. | read, 'the climate of' Britain. |
| 116 | | 4. | read, creature-worship. |
| 168 | | 28. | after Henry VIII. insert Philip II. |
| 198 | | 3. | for Exod. xv. read Genes. xv. 18. |
| 236 | | 23. | read ἀφιδιαις σοχαζοται. |
| 320 | | 8. | for state, read fortunes. |
| 322 | | 19. | after elegance, place a full stop. |
| 322 | | 26. | for prior to, read long before. |
| 340 | | 26. | for templorum, read templum. |

TO THE REVEREND
WILLIAM BACKHOUSE, D. D.

ARCHDEACON of CANTERBURY.

L E T T E R I.

DEAR SIR,

December 1, 1776.

THE following letters, addressed to you, are published, as they were written, at your instance.

I yield to your encouraging opinion of them with the less reluctance, as I am pleased with this occasion of publickly acknowledging my obligations to your candid friendship: a friendship, which commenced at that early period, when our youthful studies were our most interesting pursuits; and which has continued, through our various fortunes, with a constancy and fervour somewhat unusual, except in the romantic annals of antiquity.

Throughout this period, you have been ever mindful, absent as well as present, of an unobtrusive man. Yet you have known him uniformly devoted to the cause of letters and of revealed religion: and you have approved in him something resembling your own love of truth and candid spirit; though without pretensions to that urbanity, which con-

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ciliates

ciliates affection ; while your worth and integrity, your encouragement of literature, sacred, human, and philosophic, and above all, your cordial attachment to the simplicity and perfection of the christian faith, give you the esteem and confidence of the most eminent Characters.

The first copy of the following papers was drawn up with that familiar haste and negligence, which is never more pardonable, than in the freedom of epistolary writings. But when you thought so favourably of those rude sketches, as to advise me to retouch and fill up the outline : it was incumbent on me, to consult some good writers on the several subjects of enquiry, and to revise what I had written, with care and attention ; much more on account of the sacred importance of every thing connected with revealed religion, than of any personal reputation to be derived from so slight a performance. Such as it is, I am content to forego the praise of writing well, if I can avoid the indiscretion of injuring the noblest cause by an unequal defence.

You deemed it of moment to religion, that some one attached to her sacred interests, should step forth, to assert and vindicate her honours, from the indirect, and therefore more dangerous, aspersions of a writer of real eminence in letters and in composition. The
decorum

decorum of this author, and the splendid elegance of his style, place him in a light so superiour to that of others, who have gone before him in this unavailing hostility against Heaven's best gift to man ; that it has led me into some reflections on the various methods, in which it has pleased the divine providence to have this great cause explored, like gold in the furnace.

Christianity underwent a fiery trial from the wits of antiquity, not dissimilar to that which it hath sustained in Britain for a century past. The vulgar pagans treated the heavenly Stranger with every opprobrium, from which she was so nobly vindicated by her first apologists. To the malignity of the vulgar, succeeded the sagacity of Celsus, the learning of Porphyry, the elegance of Philostratus, the wit of Lucian. Philosophy tried her strength in this contest, and was compelled to borrow the semblance of celestial arms, to defend her exploded pretensions. Last of all, came the specious Eloquence of the later sophists, to charm the libertinism of a corrupted and declining empire, with the false glitter of Julian, and the numerous periods of Libanius.

Irreligion and even atheism appeared in Italy at the revival of letters, partly from an excessive fondness for the ancient philology,
and

and principally from the disgust, which elegant and polished minds always feel at the follies of popular superstition, then at their highth in the unreformed dominion of popery.

In England, the modern deism is the offspring of that luxury and impiety, which succeeded the Great Rebellion. The first assaults on revealed religion were rude and tumultuary, like those of peasants and barbarians. Libertinism began the attack; which was supported by the aid of Learning. Much erudition was employed, on both sides, in the conduct of this interesting controversy with an Herbert, a Blount, a Toland, a Woolston, a Collins. While the philosopher of Malmesbury attempted to reason Britons out of their faith and freedom; Shaftesbury employed the finer weapons of wit and ridicule. All in their turns have been disarmed of the power of doing mischief. It was reserved for the times we live in, to assault christianity with the shining and specious arms of Eloquence. To the plebeian style of Chubb and Morgan, to the thorny erudition of Woolston and Collins, to the wit and ribaldry of Shaftesbury and Mandeville; has succeeded the purity and elegance of Voltaire, the cold correctness of Hume, and the impassioned delicacy of Rousseau. In this great question,

question, Bolingbroke, like another Meffala, has displayed the richness and harmony of the english language. Chesterfield, leaving the debate about principles to the metaphysic of his noble predecessor, has availed himself of equal eloquence to subvert our morals. His popular letters are a complete example of human corruption, veiling itself under the decent exterior of false virtue, false science, and accomplishments equally brilliant and deceitful.

We of the present times find infidelity in a similar state to that in which the primitive christians encountered gentilism. The temples were repaired, rebuilt, and beautified; the worship of the gods was less savage and brutal; while luxury and a voluptuary superstition gave magnificence and grace to falsehood and folly. May the event, my friend, correspond to the omen. As the solid sense and piety of the first unlettered christians, baffled the wisdom, power, and interests of mankind, when united in the support of vice and imposture: so it is to be hoped, that heaven will continue to protect its best of blessings, a reasonable christianity, by inspiring its defenders with a wisdom and eloquence, which all its adversaries shall not be able to resist.

Our antagonists have been as various in
their

their mode of assault, as in their style and erudition. The first, and still the most considerable of the writers against revelation, made their objections in form to its capital proofs, the evidence of prophecy, miracles, and doctrine: and they gave occasion to a complete defence of each. Since religion has been found impregnable in her citadel, her enemies have been content to make desultory attacks on the mere out-works: and have exchanged the open war, for the more insidious and destructive way of stratagem. Not to wear out a metaphor too obvious in polemic literature; objections to revelation have been of late proposed obliquely, and where the unsuspecting reader would not think to find them. Writers of civil history have stepped out of their way, to asperse both primitive and reformed christianity. Irreligion hath appeared in the flowery dress of fable and romance; and like another Circe, hath held forth her enchanted cup, to transform men into brutes. At this very time, we see the archimage of infidelity, presenting to a dissipated public, the dotages of a worn-out imagination, in every fantastic form that fiction can assume.

To this endless variety in the manner as well as materials of error, we may contrast the unchangeable simplicity of truth. The religion of the New Testament is still the same;

same; perfect, as it came originally from the pen of inspiration. Vain have been the efforts of despotism, of superstition, of philosophy, of pleasure, and worldly interests, combined against her. She continues to triumph over all opposition, and by her victory asserts her divine pretensions. An enemy to the gospel drew this conclusion: "If this counsel, or this work, had been of men, it would have come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it."

While religion is thus exposed to a variety of insults from without; it would be a melancholy prospect, should there be any defect within, either of zeal or erudition, of union or purity. Till those, who are eminently adorned with these excellencies, think the danger pressing enough to call for their exertions, to check the libertinism, the discord, and perversions of our Faith, which occasionally alarm our fears: a less able advocate, it is hoped, will not be deemed presumptuous, in expressing a solicitude for those truths, which, besides their intrinsic excellence, have been attested by predictions, miracles, and martyrs; by their very success and prevalence over morally invincible obstacles; and above all, by their effects in all ages on the hearts of the faithful, the penitent, and the good.

An

An enquiry into these attestations of the christian religion, and the true causes of its general reception in a world that hated and persecuted it, is the leading subject of these papers. For I am not so fond of polemics, as to engage in this task merely in the view of refuting such opinions, as, if erroneous, will shortly fall into oblivion: but while I attempt to rescue truth from perversion and disguise, I am desirous to place her in so fair a point of view, as to make myself and others enamoured of her immortal beauty. In this view, I have selected and arranged, with some attention and exactness, the moral system of the New Testament: and I will cheerfully join in any censure on the rest of this correspondence, in which your partial friendship has engaged me; should I be so happy, as to persuade any of my readers, to try the efficacy of the christian ethics.

It is not my intention to follow the learned and eloquent author, on whom I presume to make some remarks, through those fields of civil history, which he traverses with so much dignity: yet I shall venture to give my thoughts, the result of some experience in this kind of literature, on historic studies and composition. It is not even my design to refute him in every particular, in which he may be candidly supposed to intend or offer

fer some disrespect to the majesty of religion. But at the same time, that I aim at a refutation or improvement of his leading principles; I wish to advance on each topic a better and a truer system, than that which religion teaches me to reject.

My letters when first addressed to you were written on the days of their respective dates: in the publication, they are much enlarged; I wish I could add, much improved. When addressed to you, they were, not improperly, interspersed with citations from those antient and modern writings, which are so pleasing and interesting to us, and which naturally recurred to my memory on this occasion. But in preparing them for the public eye, I supposed it would be more agreeable to most readers, to peruse the argument without interruption, and to consult the citations and authorities annexed to each letter in the form of remarks or illustrations.

It remains only, to request that you will patronize this work, which owes its existence to the influence of your friendship.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obliged
and affectionate Servant,

EAST APTHORP.

REMARKS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Page 5. *Messala nitidus et candidus, et quodammodo præ se ferens in dicendo nobilitatem suam ; viribus minor.*

QUINCTILIAN, X. 1.

Page 7. In all ages of the church, Deism has attended the triumphs of christianity, either as an enemy, a rebel, or a captive. Some Pagans in the evangelic age preferred a rational theism to an absurd idolatry, and became proselytes at Jerusalem, without adopting the jewish ritual. Many of the exiled Jews, on the destruction of their capital, seem to have retained no other peculiarity, than the exclusive tenet of the divine unity. Both Pagans and Jews of this cast, united in forming a sect, but little known in ecclesiastical history, the Hypsistarians or Coelicolæ of the third century. These were a sect of deists, formed by such of the Jews and Gentiles, as deserting the religion of their ancestors, substituted naturalism in its place. It does not appear, that any of them were apostates from christianity.

I find some notices of this sect, in an author too favourable to it: for it is the frenzy of our age, that irreligion finds its way into the very sanctuary. Wetstein, the last editor of the New Testament with various readings (Amst. 1751.) in his Prolegomena, i. 31, gives an account of the Cambridge MS. of the gospels and acts in Greek and Latin. “*Quod imprimis notandum, τοὺς Σεκομάρους coelicolas vertit in actis ; unde lux affulget verbis constitutionis Honorii, quam Gothofredus operosa dissertatione explicare non potuit : intelliguntur autem illi, qui Judæis olim proselyti portæ, in Anglia autem, antequam vocabulum istud in longe aliam significationem degeneraret, vocati sunt deistæ.*” And p. 38. “*Paulo distinctius explicanda sunt quæ p. 31. de coelicolis dixi ; scilicet, fuisse homines nullam religionem revelatam sive veram sive falsam admittentes, sed solam naturalem, quam ratio dicat, colentes contra quam interpretationem vir doctus objecit, tales homines ab ævo condito semper extitisse, Honorium vero atque Augustinum de*
coelicolis

coelicolis loqui tanquam de secta nova. At non difficile est, hæc in concordiam redigere. Homines quidem singulares, ita de religione sentientes, a priscis temporibus fuerunt: sed secta fuit nova: *i. e.* Sæculo demum tertio coelicolæ se ipsos a gentibus, judæis, et christianis segregare, et in societatem coire coeperunt, electo Majore seu patriarcha, et ritu baptismi instituti, quo in ecclesiam istam novam admitterentur. In his, quos græci *ἑσραϊοὶ* vocarunt, nomen suum professus erat in juventute Gregorius, pater Gregorii Nazianzeni."

This anecdote of ecclesiastical antiquity is curious enough to merit investigation. Juvenal the satyrist seems to allude to some such sect, when he describes the Jews of his time by all their peculiarities. xiv. 96—106.

Quidam, fortiti metuentem sabbata patrem,
Nil præter nubes et cœli numen adorant.

Bingham, in his learned antiquities, xvi. 6. gives the fullest account I can meet with of the coelicolæ; whom he represents as a sect of syncretists, who blended judaism with christianity. Three laws of Honorius in the Theodosian code, l. xvi. tit. 5. leg. 43, 44. et tit. 8. leg. 1. were directly formed against them: in one of which he ranks them with the heathens, as Cromwell did our English deists. In another, the emperor threatens them with civil penalties: "nisi intra anni terminos ad Dei cultum venerationemque christianam conversi fuerint, his legibus quibus præcepimus hæreticos adstringi, se quoque noverint adtinendos." An absurdity unknown in the best times and in our own, that of persecuting and punishing for opinions; of which, Bingham, ubi supra, § 6. He adds that St. Augustin, epist. 163, aliter, 44. § 13. ad Eleusium, mentions the coelicolæ, and supposes, from the title of majores given by him to their ministers, that he means a sect which apostatized from the christian to the jewish religion. V. Spondanus. Fleury. ad Ann. 408, 409.

Dr. Cave. Life of St. Gregory Nazianzen, p. 510. 'His
' father was a good man, but had been unhappily educated
' in an odd sect of religion, a kind of Samaritan mixture,
' made of judaism and paganism, or rather some select rites
" of

‘ of each. With the gentiles, they did honour to fire and
 ‘ burning lights, but rejected idols and sacrifices: with the
 ‘ Jews they observed the Sabbath and a strict abstinence from
 ‘ some kinds of meats: but disowned circumcision: pretending
 ‘ to worship no other deity, but the almighty supreme and most
 ‘ high God: whence they took to themselves the name of
 ‘ Hypsistarians. A sect not appearing among the tribes of an-
 ‘ cient hereticks, though something like to it may be found a-
 ‘ mong the Euphemitæ, mentioned by Epiphanius, *Hæres.*
 ‘ *lxxx. p. 450.* It had been, it seems, the religion of his an-
 ‘ cestors, and that wherein himself had been a bigot in his
 ‘ younger years. *Naz. Or. xix. p. 289. vid. Or. x. p. 161.*
 ‘ *xi. p. 178. De vita sua p. 2. de reb. suis, p. 33. Gregor.*
 ‘ *presb. in vita Naz. p. 3.*

Le Clerc, *Biblioth. Hist. et Univ. xviii. 1.* “Gregoire
 naquit l’an ccc. son pere—etoit né des parens, qui avoient je
 ne scai quelle religion, qui tenoit de la Païenne et de la Ju-
 daïque. Il’s n’avoient ni idoles ni sacrifices, mais ils adoroient
 le feu et les flambeaux.—Ils prenoient le nom d’Hypsistaires,
 parce qu’ils se vantoient de n’adorer que le Dieu supreme,
ψυσις. Ces gens la semblent avoir pris le culte du feu des
 mages de Cappadoce, qu’on nommoit pyrethes. *Strab. l. xv.*
p. 1065.”

There is an apparent inconsistency between this fire-worship
 and their pretensions to theism, which invalidates Wetstein’s
 conjecture. It would not be difficult to trace the history of
 deism, supposing this its origin, through the mahometan heresy
 in the viiith century, and the jewish apostacy in the first flou-
 rishing times of the Saracene Empire, on account of their
 not discovering the reasons of the law of Moses, and from
 a predilection for the Aristotelian philosophy. See Bp. War-
 burton, *D. L. b. iv. §. 6. note, p. 124.*

L E T T E R II.

ON THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

Dear Sir.

March 30, 1776.

YOUR sentiments in points of literary discussion are generally decisive, except when they are too favourable to your friend ; as they certainly are, when you recommend to him the unequal task of writing some observations on Mr. Gibbon's elegant and learned history of the decline and fall of the Roman empire. I have just given that interesting work a first perusal ; and must applaud the erudition with which the materials are collected, and the eloquence with which they are adorned. In other respects, I regret the misapplication of this author's fine taste and talents ; as, both the structure and principles of his work, are, in my opinion, liable to just exceptions.

I was disappointed in my expectations of instruction from this book, when I discerned that the author had adopted that entertaining
but

but superficial manner of writing history, which was first introduced by the Abbé de Vertot; whose history of the Revolutions in the government of the Roman republic is one of those agreeable and seducing models, which never fail of producing a multitude of imitations. There is, in this way of writing, merit enough to recommend it to such readers, and such writers, as propose to themselves no higher aim, than an elegant literary amusement: it piques their curiosity, while it gratifies their indolence. The historian has the advantage, in this way, of passing over such events and institutions, as, however essential to the science of history, are less adapted to shine in the recital. By suppressing facts, and violating chronology; by selecting the most pleasing incidents, and placing them in a striking point of view, by the colouring and drapery of style and composition: the imagination is gratified with a gaudy spectacle of triumphs and revolutions passing in review before it; while the rapid succession of great events affords a transient delight, without leaving useful and lasting impressions either on the memory or judgment; or fixing those principles, which ought to be the result of historic information.

Nor

Nor is it the worst consequence of this slight and modish way of compiling history, that it affords to supine and unreflecting readers a barren entertainment, to fill up the vacant hours of indolence and dissipation. The historian, who gives himself the privilege, of mutilating and selecting, and arranging at discretion, the records of past ages; has full scope, to obtrude on his careless readers any system, that suits with his preconceived opinions or particular views in writing.

Voltaire * has given the brightest lustre and polish, both of style and selection, to this agreeable and seducing mode of composition. The manners and spirit of nations from Charlemagne to the present times, are described in a moving picture, more animated than exact, more amusing than instructive; while not a single authority is alleged for the truth of facts, and the writer's own

* Si cet homme illustre, dont l'activité semble suffire à tout, et qui a voulu embrasser tant de connoissances diverses, eût donné la première moitié de sa vie à la poésie, et la seconde à l'histoire; s'il eût voulu, dans cette nouvelle carrière, prendre tout le tems d'étudier les faits et de rechercher la vérité;—s'il se fût enfin proposé pour but dans ce travail, non la satisfaction stérile d'amuser et de plaire, mais l'ineffable avantage de rendre les hommes et meilleurs et plus heureux; il n'eût fait que des chef-d'œuvres.

Bibliothèque de Me. la Dauphine. p. 143.

PARIS, 1770.

own system is insensibly insinuated into the reader's judgment.

Dum studet urbanus, tenditque disertus haberi;
Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile. * —

HORAT. lib. I. ep. xix. 16.

The prejudices of the accomplished author of the late history of the decline of the Roman Empire, are so obvious from the most cursory perusal of his work; as to lead both the friends and enemies of revealed religion to discern, that the ecclesiastical part of the imperial history was much more interesting to the writer, than the confused policy, the military despotism, and rapid succession of its sanguinary tyrants.

To examine this entertaining performance in all its parts, would require the copious and magnificent library, as well as the learning and eloquence of its author. My disparity in all these advantages can be compensated, only by that sincere and ardent love of truth, with which I have long accustomed myself to

* Il est dangereux, de se proposer des modeles, qui ne peuvent etre copiés, que par leurs defauts. SANADON.

to consider every subject of enquiry; especially, such enquiries as affect the most interesting and important of all truths, the christian revelation.

As I shall probably give you, in the course of these letters, a variety of incidents and observations, drawn from civil and ecclesiastical history: you will permit me to make some previous reflections on the general topic of history and its kindred sciences. My reflections, you know, are often employed on real or fancied improvements in literature and theology.

Our early studies are perhaps too much and too long engaged in the attractive inventions of poetry and eloquence. These, when too fondly entertained, engross and pervert the heart and understanding. The reasoning powers are enfeebled by an incessant address to the imagination and the ear. Even in our fond pursuit of fanciful and poetic imagery, we seldom prefer the best models. That species of poetic composition, which, in the judgment of Aristotle, is of all the most useful and perfect, the Greek tragedy, is perhaps less studied, than the harmonious versifiers in the debauched times of the Ptolemies and the Cæsars. The same observation may be extended to the lyric and the epic species, of
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which the best examples are to be drawn from those ages, which were least corrupted by the refinements of social life.

Eloquence may be rationally and usefully considered in its connexion with history. For rhetorical compositions on ideal subjects, many of which are left us by the elder and the later sophists, are too frivolous to merit our attention. We do not much interest ourselves in an encomium on the beauty of Helena, or a vindication of Busiris, though graced by the flowing periods of Isocrates: but we are charmed with that sweet rhetorician, when he exhorts the Greeks to national concord, or paints an accomplished monarch in the character of Evagoras. The ancient historians themselves, abound with the best examples of eloquence; the more interesting, as they spring from the events recorded. Whatever judgment we may form of direct speeches in real history; we read them with too much pleasure and advantage, not to yield to the agreeable delusion; which does not impair the truth of facts, while it suggests the most interesting reflections.

The elaborate speeches of the great orators, in the first period of Greek eloquence; those of Cicero, so perfect in their kind; and even those of the later sophists under the Cæsars, when

when employed on subjects of real life; are part of the historic memoirs of their respective times. Poetry itself might be reduced to the historic order. Homer, Virgil, Silius, Lucan, Claudian, do not conceal historic truth, while they clothe and adorn it with the epic magnificence.

Were we to begin anew the career of literature, we should perhaps keep our attention fixed on its uses in theology and civil life. With these in view; a more methodized, enlarged, and liberal compass of philology; a clearer and a shorter course of mathematics and the higher physics; an ample fund of literary history; a sound and rational logic; a practical system of ethics; an humane and equitable theory of policy; a critical view of the history and opinions of philosophy; and especially, the study of original historians, civil and ecclesiastical; would be the best preparatives to the extensive science of theology, and to an useful if not a prosperous course of life.

To confine our thoughts for the present, to the study of history: You, my friend, who know how much of a retired life hath been spent in this way, will exculpate me from the seeming arrogance of making some observations on historic studies and composition; which I should not have attempted, had
you

you not expressly requested my thoughts on this subject.

The historic science is so congenial to the structure of the human mind, so interesting to curiosity, so responsive to memory, so conducive to instruction, and so enlarges the boundaries of personal experience; that the best way of recommending this study, is to give some clear principles for the conduct of it.

Original historians and authentic records supply the materials of information: Order of time and place are essential, that the mind may arrange them without confusion: and some principles are requisite to attain the instruction and utility which results from it.

The human mind is slow in acquiring an enlarged and exact view of general history: it takes the alarm at an enterprize so extensive, as the knowledge of all the memorable events in every period of time. Yet the life of man, and his powers of application and memory, if neither neglected nor dissipated, are not unequal to this comprehensive knowledge, under proper limitations.

Religion and policy are the ends of history; and should be ever kept in view, in its study and composition. The origin of nations,

ons, and their migrations from one country to another, the succession of monarchs, battles, and conquests, are the technical divisions of a science, which terminates in the evidence of religion, and the duties of government and subjection.

For the first purpose, the proof of revealed religion, the sacred scriptures are so constructed, as to comprehend the general history of mankind, either in narration, or in prophecy: hence, they derive through all ages an infallible credential of their inspiration.

Religion is preserved and perpetuated in a single family, which branches into a nation, not considerable for extent of territory; but whose affairs are so complicated with those of the great monarchies all around them, as to authenticate, both by national and foreign testimony, the truth of their own records. In the earliest times, the rising kingdoms of the East are seen in connexion with the patriarchal story. Egypt opens her hospitable arms, to receive, as guests, the family of her benefactor. The high antiquity of that kingdom, so conspicuous in the Greek historians, is an evidence to the books of Moses. The nations of Palestine, Idumæa, Arabia, Syria, and all the East, from the Mediterranean to the Tigris, are interested in the fortunes of the people of God. In the sacred history only,
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is an uninterrupted succession, which includes that of other kingdoms, as they rise and set: their origin and succession would be utterly unknown, but for that connexion. The Jewish nation is the only one, which has continued unextinct from their great ancestor to the present time; a circumstance which visibly authenticates their whole history, and the revelation which it includes.

The Jewish monarchy is itself the most considerable of the Eastern kingdoms, till the rise of the IId Assyrian empire under Arbaces, and that of Babylon under Belesis or Nabonassar. These two empires were raised up to punish the apostate tribes of Israel and Judah, by dispersion and captivity; till the dominion of all Asia centers at length in Cyrus their restorer, the greatest, perhaps the best, of the ancient kings; who first understood the policy of governing, while the rest could only conquer.

A new scene succeeds: and the affairs of Palestine become involved in those of Persia, till the conquest of Asia from the Hellespont to the Indus by the arms of Alexander. The Theocracy itself becomes a part of those conquests; and continues subject to the oppressive dominion of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies; till the Roman republic involves them all in her providential triumphs.

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That an inconsiderable people, only eminent by being the depositaries of divine revelation, should thus be preserved amidst so many revolutions; and should in every successive dominion, find at once a protector and a scourge, to punish not destroy them: is a singularity so memorable, as impels us to contemplate its final cause. This can be no other than a providential scheme, in the midst of an universal polytheism, to maintain the doctrine of the divine unity, preparatory to the great purpose of revealing christianity.

The counsels of God are distinguished from those of men, by the natural unfitness of the agents employed to execute them. The great principle of the divine unity was discovered, and committed in the sacred writings, to a people so debased by long servitude, and even so addicted to all the Egyptian superstitions; that it is evident they could not themselves have invented their religious system. Had the intelligent Athenians been chosen for this purpose, of maintaining so reasonable a tenet in the midst of idolatry; we should have ascribed the glory of such a discovery, to the schools of philosophy, and to the fine genius of that enlightened people. Yet, if we believe the most authentic memoirs, those of Xenophon; Socrates himself was a virtuous

ous and devout polytheist, to the last hour of his life.

If this, my friend, be not the true key, that opens all the intricacies of ancient history; it must appear, as perhaps it does to unreflecting readers, to have no consistent plan whatever: and to suppose, that the revolutions of civil history, are the mere effects of policy and conquest, to the exclusion of a presiding providence; is an impiety, which reason rejects and revelation disproves.

Thus far, we have brought the general history of mankind to center in one point; the preservation of the first revelation, till the introduction of the second.

Before we proceed to a distinct view of the christian history, I shall obey your injunctions, in characterizing the principal historians of this first period.

Fortunately (for it was not the result of judgment) my historic studies were early directed to those original writers, who are now the only depositaries of the records of mankind: and the first, and truly original historians, are those of the Hebrew scriptures. The sacred writers, to the unequalled dignity of their subject, unite a majestic simplicity and perspicuity of style and narration. Moses, the most ancient, is the most perfect of historians. His style is copious, even, and clear. Like a deep river, he bears his reader
with

with a calm and majestic course. It was his purpose, to give us a body of laws, as well as a thread of history; and by interweaving them together he has authenticated both. For it is impossible to forge the civil and religious polity of a great nation.

In the succeeding books of the historic scriptures, I think we may discern a manner of writing less simple, less pure, than that of Moses. The reign of David and that of Solomon may be deemed the Augustan age of Hebrew literature. The writings of this period are correct, expressive, harmonious. In the subsequent memoirs, we see the Hebrew style manifestly tinged with the Arabian, Persian, and Chaldaic idioms.

Josephus has given us an agreeable paraphrase and continuation of the sacred history, and includes a much longer period than any other historian. His antiquities are, for many reasons, essential to the study of general history.

It is a common mistake, to begin our historic studies with Herodotus. This father of civil history is in his method too intricate, his matter too various, his erudition too profound, for the uninitiated. Josephus in the sacred history, Diodorus in the profane, are the best guides antiquity hath left us.

The

The usefulness of Diodorus both in sacred and civil history, can only be estimated by a diligent perusal. When you first laid your commands on me, to write my thoughts on this subject; I had nearly perused the remaining entire books of the learned Sicilian; a contemporary of Julius Cæsar, with whose invasion of Britain he finished his historic library. His style is more perspicuous, than studied or elegant; and it varies with that of the original writers from whom he compiled. Detached parts of his work are written with uncommon beauty. His proëm, for instance, on the uses of history, is one of the best of those beautiful prefaces, which most of the ancients have prefixed to their historic writings. Diodorus has also given elegant proëms to each book, which form agreeable transitions. His account of the mythology and polytheism of ancient nations is highly interesting; and his history of Egypt, and of the first Assyrian empire, reflects great light on holy scripture.

His fifth book is an admirable piece of geography, especially of the islands, and the best introduction to the comprehensive work of Strabo.

Sacred history and prophecy have sustained an irreparable loss by the chasm in Diodorus from the sixth to the tenth book inclusive, which

in which he had given the history and antiquities of the eastern kingdoms. From the eleventh to the twentieth book, he proceeds in an uninterrupted course of annals from the expedition of Xerxes in the LXXVth Olympiad to the defeat and death of Antigonus in the CXXth. The extracts and fragments of the last xx books are full of good sense and instruction, moral and philosophic, as well as historical. In a continued series of CLXXX years he connects and methodizes the Greek history, and includes in one clear detail the diffusive narrations of Herodotus, Ctesias, Thucydides, Xenophon, a considerable part of Polybius; not to mention the lost historians, and Plutarch and Arrian, who wrote after him, but whose subjects are within the foregoing interval. Thus the history of Diodorus, like the Julian period in chronology, includes and connects the relations of all the extant and many lost historians prior to the Christian æra.

What charms me most in Diodorus is his humanity. An equitable strain of upright policy animates all his reflections. He was not dazzled by the military glories he incessantly records; and every page of his work inspires philanthropy and moderation. He abounds with moral and even religious sentiments; and he speaks more reasonably of
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the Jewish affairs, than most of the Greek or any of the Roman writers.

It is not my purpose to speak minutely of the merits of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon : the masters of the three different styles, the florid, the austere, the temperate. They are above praise, and will be read with delight, and without obscurity, after Diodorus.

Plutarch, and the Latin biographers, should be classed, as their subject leads, in the body of general history : without this connection, the lives of illustrious men are less interesting, and often scarce intelligible.

Of the history of the Roman republic it is difficult to speak, either with fulness or brevity, on account of the dignity and extent of the subject,

Dionysius conducts us clearly and copiously, through a period of little more than the three first centuries, and his history (which originally ended, where Polybius begins) fails us at the cccxiith year of Rome, soon after the tyranny and abolition of the decemvirate, which he has related in a very instructive manner. Livy is an elegant epitomizer of this period, in his three first books, which are a perfect contrast to the prolix and digressive manner of Dionysius. The character and credit of this author hath been too
much

much exalted by his admirers, Mr. Spelman and many others; too invidiously depressed by Mr. Hooke and his followers. He has more of the antiquary and the rhetorician, than of the judicious simplicity of a great historian: but, without him, we should be very uninformed of the origin, the religion, and forms of government, regal and republican,

Per quæ Latinum nomen et Italæ
Crevere vires; famaue et imperi
Porrecta majestas, ad ortum
Solis ab Hesperio cubili.

HORAT. l. iv, od. 15.

Those arts, by which the Latian name,
The Roman strength, th' imperial power,
With awful majesty unbounded spread
To rising Phœbus from his western bed.

FRANCIS.

The merit of Polybius compels me to vindicate him from the harsh censures of his late excellent translator. From a recent perusal of his five books which remain entire, I cannot assent to Mr. Hampton's idea of him, which is so elegantly expressed in his preface.

' Instead of having gained any approved
' degree of excellence in either of the estab-
lished

' blished modes of composition, he on the
 ' contrary, revolts alike against the laws of
 ' all. Instead of charms that might allure,
 ' an energy that might command, or flow-
 ' ing softness that might carry with it the
 ' attention of the reader: we meet at every
 ' step some deformity, which excites dis-
 ' gust, some coldness which offends, some
 ' obstacles which expose our patience to the
 ' severest proof.' This surely is no gentle
 critique, it is perhaps severely just: what
 follows, is carrying censure to excess. ' In-
 ' stead of elegant simplicity, we find in every
 ' part a rustick coarseness: instead of a neat
 ' and clear conciseness, a redundance of im-
 ' pure expression: instead of an assemblage of
 ' kindred images, allusions remote and for-
 ' ced: and in the place of a full, majestic,
 ' and continued harmony, sounds that fa-
 ' tigue, and wound the ear, periods broken
 ' and transversed:—writings void of all the
 ' charms of nature and of art; which dis-
 ' play neither elegance nor strength; neither
 ' ease nor dignity, simplicity nor majesty;
 ' but are in every part disfigured, either by
 ' tasteless and ill sorted ornaments, or a ne-
 ' gligence that is wholly destitute of grace.'

Permit me to remark on this fine writer,
 that in these passages of his preface, he seems
 to have been trying his skill at the modula-
 tion

tion of periods, and the grace of antithesis; neither of which are the excellencies of Polybius. But in the place of every false or superfluous ornament, he excels in a style truly political, grave, and energetic: his periods are to my ear neither harsh nor affected, but have a simple cadence and natural harmony: and instead of ‘a congenial and inbred obscurity, which results from complicated and embarrassed sense; from periods disordered and transposed; from useless expletives; and from words, either destitute of any signification, or full of doubtful and intricate meanings;’ (which charge of obscurity, is the strongest impeachment of any writer, especially of historic composition :) I find in Polybius, a manner of writing that indeed requires a thoughtful and attentive reader, with some preparatory knowledge of antiquity, but uniform and expressive: a method clear and natural, not darkened, though often suspended, by those reflections, which are the soul of history: in fine, such a fullness, and even redundancy, in his narration and political observations, as leaves no obscurity on his admirable good sense, and little room for any addition to his just and instructive sentiments.

His true character may be expressed in the words of this very preface, which
has

has excited this short vindication of a favourite historian. ‘ Torn by violence
 ‘ from the service of his country, and fixed
 ‘ to a long abode in that great city, which
 ‘ was the fountain of all the counsels that
 ‘ directed and sustained the Roman empire;
 ‘ he had both leisure and the means to draw
 ‘ together the instruction that was requisite
 ‘ for carrying into execution the design which
 ‘ he had formed.—It is the statesman, the
 ‘ general, the philosopher, who speaks to
 ‘ us as in his closet, in familiar language;
 ‘ recounts simply all that was transacted;
 ‘ confirms fact by testimony; and enables us
 ‘ to derive an easy and immediate proof
 ‘ from the prudence or misconduct of past
 ‘ times, by reflections deep and solid, gently
 ‘ enforced upon us, as by the authority
 ‘ of a parent, or urged with the fond affection
 ‘ of a friend.’

The scope of Polybius was to persuade the Greeks to acquiescence under the Roman dominion. His politics are a contrast to those of Machiavel. Casaubon in his dedication to Henry the Great, (a dedication worthy of such an historian, such an editor, and such a patron) compares and prefers him to Tacitus.

The method of Polybius, while his work was entire in forty books, was, after an introduction

trodition in II books, on the first punic war, and the revolt of the mercenaries, to give a general history of 53 years, from the cXLth olympiad, or second punic war, to the conquest of Macedon: and he had added a relation of eight years more, to the taking of Carthage by Scipio, the destruction of Corinth by Memmius, and the entire conquest of Macedon by Metellus, A. U. 607.

Polybius supposed his subject the greatest in civil history: but the succeeding century was still more brilliant, for the power and extent of the Roman republic. The vast capacity and majestic eloquence of Livy alone, was equal to the task of describing it: but we must repair his loss, where the story becomes most interesting, from Sallust, Cesar, and the writings of Cicero; and especially from Appian, who wrote a distinct history of the principal provinces of the republic, in a method not very clear, but with much good sense and exactness. His memoirs of the Civil wars, including the death of the Gracchi, the Social war, that of Cinna and Octavius, of Marius and Sylla, and of the three Triumvirates, is better methodized and very circumstantial, and terminates in the death of Sextus Pompeius, A. U. 718.

Dio Cassius connects the history of the republic with that of the empire. He has the

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merit

merit and utility, which I have ascribed to Diodorus, of combining the interrupted narrations of Velleius, Tacitus, Herodian, and the Augustan history, in one copious detail. No other historian has given us so ample and methodical a recital of that celebrated æra, the Augustan age, including the whole life of Augustus, for LXXV years, from the consulate of Cicero. It is the subject of XX books of Dio's history (though with a defect of ten years, A. U. 747—757) from the 37th to the 56th inclusive. Dio's entire work included a period of 980 years, from the foundation of Rome, to his own II^d consulate. The faults of this historian are well known: his invectives against the old republican patriots, his adulation of the imperial government, and his superstition, together with a degeneracy of style, place him as much below the preceding writers of the Roman history, as he is more interesting by the greatness of his subject, which includes and connects the two grand divisions of human affairs.

Here I take my leave of the civil history of that long period which elapsed before the Christian æra: for all events prior to the Olympiads, we have little other light, than that of scripture, and a few fragments preserved by the later Greeks: from the
Olympiads,

Olympiads, we have a succession of history, gradually more authentic, for DCCC years.

Our early attainments in the historic science should be directed by the order of events, and limited to that period we have already described. The Asiatic, the Grecian, the Roman annals, are the proper nourishment of young minds, while unbroken with the cares, unembarrassed with the business of life. The Christian æra is the barrier, from whence the experienced student begins a new career. His philosophic mind which contemplates a providence presiding over those events which terminate in the new religion, discerns a prophetic discovery of the principal revolutions in this second period: and comparing history with prophecy, forms a moral demonstration of revealed truths; a demonstration resulting from the whole course of history, and no less certain than any mathematical theorem.

It would be deviating too far from this contracted plan of universal history, to point out the revolutions of religion and empire, succeeding the Christian æra; predicted in the Old Testament in general terms; in the New, with every circumstance of distinction, that can give ever-growing credibility, ever-brightening evidence to this last revelation.

All prophecy is a proper miracle. The study of prophecy, which must be founded on that of history, charms and enraptures the imagination, while it convinces the severest reason. The double image, presented to the mind in prophecy, produces the effect of the finest allegory: the mind is delighted with the discovery of most important truths concealed under the envelope of figurative expression: and when we consider, in how agreeable a manner the truth of religion is thus ascertained by prophecy and history, we may adopt Seneca's beautiful expression, 'amamur ad delicias.'

Examine with attention a few chapters of the apocalypse, of those historic passages, which have received their completion; and in which we trace with wonder and adoration the ways of providence, in the annals of mankind. We may contemplate the state of religion and empire in four distinct periods.

1. The Roman empire, spread over and beyond its enormous republic, carried to its acmé by the arms and policy of Trajan; thence declining, till the establishment of a new empire in the East; and verging to its fall, by the extinction of its martial spirit, and the irruption of barbarians, from Africa, from the north of Europe, and from the north west of Asia. Revelat. Ch. VI—VIII.

2. The

2. The religion and empire of Mahomet, and the Caliphs his successors (the antichrist of the East) are foretold with circumstances, that discriminate the Saracen conquests, and the Turkish Sultanies, from all other systems of policy. Revelat. Ch. IX.

3. The next period of history and prophecy, is that wonderful dominion of the papacy, erected on the ruins of the western empire. Its rise and fortunes are described with great particularity by St. John, Ch. XI—XVII.

4. The last great scene of history, which is as yet disclosed to us (for we presume not to conjecture future events from the mysterious predictions, Ch. XVIII—XX.) is that of the reformation, which followed those schisms in the papacy, which weakened her ecclesiastical tyranny, during the whole of the XVth century.

That constant harmony between predictions and events, which is styled by Lord Bacon, 'the history of prophecy,' is a true and strict demonstration, that the universal establishment of the religion of the gospel, is the ultimate end of the providential government of this world. And the inference from the knowledge of history, is most worthy of a providential administration, as well as most important to man: 'I must submit to that
theocracy,

theocracy, which is the final cause of all civil empire: which is now visibly administered in all christian states: which in due time will include all the nations of the earth: and which is the only source of human felicity.'

To enter on the consideration of these four periods of general history, since the christian æra: the first century of that æra, is a model, by which the religious character of succeeding ages ought to be estimated. The memoirs of the apostolic age are dispersed in the writings of antiquity, and collected by modern historians. But as my object is to mention those original writers, from whom we derive our knowledge of antiquity: of these, next to the apostles and apostolic writers, the pre-eminence is justly due to the parent of ecclesiastical history, the learned Eusebius. His Chronicle is our best guide through the darkness of the most remote antiquity: and his History gives the only account we have of that interesting period of the church, before its civil establishment. In VII books, he collects from antiquity a great many anecdotes, respecting the canon of the New Testament, the principles of the first churches, the persecutions, and the literary labours of the christian clergy. In the VIIIth and following books, and in his life

or

or rather panegyric of Constantine, he gives the history of his own times.

Socrates and Sozomen, scholastics, that is advocates or lawyers of Constantinople, continued the history of Eusebius, from the accession of Constantine, to the younger Theodosius. The former of these historians merits our approbation, more than either the credulous Sozomen, or the superstitious, though learned and excellent Theodoret, whose *Philotheus*, or memoirs of the ancient ascetics, I recollect to have given me a strong aversion from the superstitions of popery. The chief subject of these three authors, is the Arian heresy; which a celebrated French poet so justly characterises.

L'Eglise, deux fois presque toute Arienne,
Sentit chez soi trembler la Verité chretienne:
Lorsqu', attaquant le Verbe et sa divinité,
D'une syllabe impie un saint mot augmenté
Remplit tous les esprits d'aigreurs si meurtrieres,
Et fît du sang chretien couler tant de rivières.

BOILEAU. Sat. xii. 197.

An Arian writer, Philostorgius, is worth perusing, though in an abridgment, not that he at all mends our opinion of his sect; but because truth is never more honoured than by the testimony of her enemies. For this reason, I regret the loss of those ancient writers
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who employed their talents to discredit revelation ; and who are of all the best, because the most unexceptionable evidences, in its favour.

Evagrius and the rest cannot be applauded as good writers, but must be read for the sake of facts. *Historia*, says Pliny, *quoquo modo scripta delectat* : and we must console ourselves with this maxim, as we proceed lower down the current of time.

Nicephorus Callistus combines, continues, and corrupts the ecclesiastical history of the first six centuries. He addresses his work to Andronicus Palæologus, A. 1290.

2. The Mohammedan or Saracenic history, forms a perfect contrast to that of pure Christianity. The vast empire erected by the Arabians still subsists in the dominion of the Othman Turks, Persians, Tartars, and Moguls. The history of Mohammed and his successors the Khalifs, to the abolition of the Khalifat in the 656th year of the Hejra, A. D. 1258, has been diligently compiled from Eastern writers by the authors of the Modern universal history. They censure the *Histoire des Arabes* par l'Abbé de Marigny, as disingenuously copied from d'Herbelot and Ockley ; whose lives of Abubeker, Omar, Othman, Ali, Hafan, and other immediate successors of Mohammed, are collected from the most
authen-

authentic arabian authors. It is an interesting circumstance in the history of this fierce people, that they are no less famous for the cultivation of antient literature, than for their extensive conquests.

3. Synchronizing with the Saracenic empire in the East, is the papal dominion in the West; both highly interesting, to the philosopher and the divine; interesting, in proportion as they are little or inaccurately known. To record and to adorn a recital of those ages, when barbarism and superstition overspread the world, would require an impartial protestant pen; and such a compilation would do honour to the most polite and philosophic historian.

A curiosity to know the extent and the changes of the Greek language led me, many years since, to peruse several of the Byzantine historians: and I was agreeably surprized to find a considerable degree of purity in the Greek writers (in this and other respects superior to the Latin of the lower empire) from Homer to the taking of Constantinople. Theophylact the historian, the patriarch Nicephorus, Constantine Porphyrogennetes, Bryennius Cesar, Anna Comnena, and some others, may be read without disgust and with much improvement. Laonicus, almost the latest of the Byzantine writers, in

a style by no means contemptible, brings down the history of the Greek empire to the year 1463, when Mahomet II. now firmly seated on the throne of Constantine, built a magnificent mosque to rival S. Sophia, and established the Mohammedan deism.

In the perusal of these historians, we have the pleasure of a modern traveller, who, with some disagreeable circumstances, surveys the celebrated scenes of ancient story. Greece and Asia even in their ruins present an affecting and an enchanting spectacle.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,

Isles, that crown the Ægæan deep,

Fields, that cool Ilyffus laves,

Or where Mæander's amber waves

In ling'ring labyrinths creep.—

Where each old poetic mountain

Inspiration breath'd around ;

Every shade and hallow'd fountain

Murmured deep a solemn sound.

Till the sad nine, in Greece's evil hour,

Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains ;

Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant-power,

And coward vice, that revels in her chains.

Mr. GRAY.

There

There is no part of the history of mankind more interesting to us, who have happily escaped from its tyranny, than the spiritual and temporal power of the papacy. In tracing the causes of this unprecedented empire, we may adopt the system of a celebrated church-historian.

When the Western empire was invaded from the north of Europe, in the 5th century, by the Goths, Heruli, Franks and Huns, and by the Vandals from Africa; these nations, as yet unchristianized, found no power in Italy more respectable than that of the bishops of Rome. Leo, surnamed the Great, availed himself of the anarchy of the times, to aggrandize his see. For the papacy uniformly acted on that maxim, to which Polybius ascribes the successes of the Roman republic. They took the advantage of every favourable incident; they repelled adverse events with vigour; and formed new enterprises on every success. The ruling cause of the greatness of Rome, both pagan and papal, was the continual growing appetite for new acquisitions; an appetite, always seconded by perseverance in attempts, and violence or fraud, unchecked by justice, in the accomplishment.

The barbarians, as they adopted christianity, though corrupted by arianism and many

ny superstitions, easily on their conversion transferred to the Italian clergy and to the bishops of Rome the same extravagant powers, which had been exercised for many ages by their own priesthood, the Druids. What those powers were, and how nearly resembling the papal tyranny in after ages, appears from the accounts of the Celtic religion in Cesar and Tacitus. The secular power, the superstition, and the cruelties of the druidical priesthood, were by the barbarians transferred by right of conquest to their new subjects; and the christian church became the licensed theatre of tyranny, imposture, and persecution.

The most probable reason of the too general neglect of this period of history is the barbarism of historians. But in so interesting enquiries, the mind, intent on things, considers the barbarous style and superstition of the annalist or biographer, as characteristic of their times: and peruses an Anastasius or a Luitprand, with the same philosophic spirit, which had formerly been charmed with a Livy or a Cesar. As times improve, writers become more polished and discerning. A Sleidan, a Thuanus, a Seckendorf, adorn and eternize the auspicious æra of the reformation, which forms a bright contrast to the preceding dark millennium; a period uniformly

formly distinguished by the depression of science, religion, and society.

The study of the middle ages must be attended with one peculiar advantage, that the worst idea we have of popery is given by her own records: since the reformation especially, papal Rome has been vanquished by the good sense and probity of her own historians, a Machiavel, a Paolo, and a Giannone.

The accomplished historian of the reign of the emperor Charles V. has fixed on an epocha illustrious in itself and its effects: 'a period,' to borrow his own correct expressions, 'at which the political state of Europe began to assume a new form.' In this view, his account of that emperor, 'is an introduction to the history of Europe, subsequent to his reign.' The student in modern history, cannot begin with a better introduction, than this justly admired writer's view of the progress of society in Europe, from the subversion of the Roman empire, to the XVth century: wherein the interior government, national force, and political constitution of the European states, are accurately and elegantly explained: and the results of this enquiry, is this noble and animating truth; that the spirit of protestantism is the parent of civil freedom and social happiness.

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In the contemplation of general history, small states and single incidents however memorable, are but as rivulets and streams that fall into some great river, are lost in its course, and only serve to swell its current. The history of mankind is in a considerable degree included in that of the great monarchies and republics, which have passed before us in this short review: The first and second Assyrian empires, those of Babylon and Persia, that of Alexander and his successors, the Roman republic, form the first great period. The Roman empire, the Khalîfate and Indian history, the papacy, the reformation, the American history, and that of the present age, are the great divisions of the second period. The mind possessed of a just theory, collected from the events of these epochas, will easily combine with them, the series and succession of particular kingdoms; which forms that national history which is so interesting to our partial patriotism as citizens; while the general system interests our philanthropy as men, and our faith as christians. I have spoken more amply, in this IId period, of the ecclesiastical, than of the civil history; partly, as they are best seen in connection, and blended in one narrative, secular events being inseparable from those of the church; and principally,

pally, as the ecclesiastical history is less cultivated in this kingdom, than perhaps is requisite, either for the explication of the prophetic scriptures, or for the defence of our envied constitution.

A general ecclesiastical history, on the liberal principles of our own church, is still a desideratum in our English literature. It would be a fit undertaking for some society of learned and judicious writers. It would require herculean strength and application, perfect leisure, ample libraries; perspicuity and eloquence, and above all, candour and the love of truth; 'in order,' as Lord Bacon expresses it, 'to make the virtue and sincerity of such a work, equal to the mass and quantity of the materials'. From the difficulty and extent of the undertaking, no general and circumstantial history of the church has ever been completed in any language. The authors of such a work, should be free from every prejudice, except that honest prejudice, which arises from rational conviction, in favour of our common Christianity. A prejudice against it is an insuperable bias on the mind of the most capable historians, who should write even the civil history of the Christian times. If an historian, instead of proposing to himself a transient applause from the corrupt suffrage of his own times, would consecrate his work

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as a possession for eternity: let him consult the interests of virtue and of faith; let him shun the spirit of irreligion, which, like a millstone, sinks every work, which it adheres to, into infamy and oblivion.

We see this remark exemplified in Mr. Hume, whose bias to a system of despotism, and aversion to our reformed christianity, are so conspicuous blemishes in his well-written history of Great Britain; a work rather agreeable than elaborate, too general to be sufficiently instructive. In opposition to the false principles which prevail throughout that history: Dr. Robertson, and the late translator of Mosheim's institutions, have evinced, that the learning and good sense of the reformers, the most eminent men of their times, fully vindicate them from the charge of fanaticism: and the excellent bishop Hurd, in those incomparable dialogues, which you and I have so much admired, has demonstrated, with great erudition, that the English constitution is founded on the principles of freedom, inclosed, as he elegantly expresseth it, in the ancient trunk of the feudal law, acquiring fresh force and vigour with age; and from a just intermixture of the regal and popular forms, planted together in the earliest days, but grown up at length to full maturity, is the only one in the

the records of time, which hath ever attained to the perfection of civil government.

Antiquity has a peculiar native air and aspect, seldom preserved but in its original portrait; and almost always changed in features or colouring, even in the most finished copies. Truth, not only historic but in works of imagination, is of so delicate a complexion, as scarce to admit of a perfect resemblance or imitation. When we read the poems of Homer without prevention, and in a spirit of criticism; we perceive them to be the productions of a most enlarged and exalted genius, of a fertile and bold invention, and of an enthusiasm naturally and copiously expressing itself in a language peculiar to this poet, of his own combining from the several dialects of Greece. We see in him a semi-barbarous poet, painting the rude and savage manners of a barbarous age with a pencil congenial to the subject and the time. Such is the original Homer. But when we read the finest translation that was ever made, that with which our correct and harmonious poet has adorned him; the rudeness of the ancient bard gives place to a courtly elegance of composition, and to heroes of a milder and more magnanimous cast. This observation may be extended to history, when seen in its native dress of original memoirs,

moirs, and when decorated by the eloquence of an able compiler. The compilation is perhaps more agreeable than the originals; but it is not so expressive of truth and manners.

The writers of the Augustan history are deservedly reprobated for their barbarous style and uncouth narration. Yet they have given a more natural portrait of the licence of their times, of the imperial tyranny, and of the state of religion and policy, in a variety of curious facts and anecdotes; than is to be seen in the late polished relation of the declining empire. You, my friend, who know my fancy for decoration and ornament in works of literature, will not suspect me of barbarism, when I advance this position as the basis of my system; that the only legitimate study of history is in original historians. These are the text of history: compilers, however sagacious, learned, or eloquent, are only commentators, interpreters, and translators. The last of these departments, I mean that of faithful and elegant translation, is a real accession to our national stock of literature. To pursue my allusion; when the text is familiar, the commentary is interesting and instructive: and I much doubt, whether historic researches are in any considerable degree pleasing or instructive,

instructive, except to such as trace them from the source of information. Thus, for example, the early history of the Church will not be a very agreeable subject, unless we take our first ideas of it from Eusebius and the writers of the first ages; in whose native recitals it is inexpressibly interesting. Compilers indeed presuppose their readers versed in their authorities: and the investigations, into which they are led by the diversity of opinions formed on ancient memoirs, are insipid to such as do not recur to those authentic relations.

Yet I would not be deemed an enemy to that agreeable way of studying original historians, which engages the learned and judicious reader to become himself an historian, and to cope with his originals, in the beauty, order, and truth of his narration. I will even venture on the presumption of describing what seems the best mode of conducting such compilations; which are brought into great credit among us, by the fine writers who have lately been employed in them. If I were to combine the excellencies of a perfect historian in an ideal union: a judicious choice and accurate knowledge of the subject, should be graced by a luminous method and a sedate majesty of style, conducted by a

philosophic discernment, and a religious integrity of principle.

Those fields of history which have been already beaten; those subjects which have become celebrated by the recording pens of all learned and polished nations; may now be left to those who have successfully treated them. The ancient Sacred history, the Ægyptian and Carthaginian, the Persian, Greek and Roman affairs are sufficiently celebrated by the recording pens of all civilized and literary nations. France especially has excelled in compilations of this kind; an advantage partly owing to the happy leisure of their learned ecclesiastics; and chiefly to their language; which, in the judgment of our best critic,* being simple, clear, and exact, is fitted for business, conversation, and narrative. The only novelty that can grace this subject is to be found in the great originals who have consigned it to immortality: and who abound with curious anecdotes, unknown and unexpected by such as have only perused the modern collections. At present, the most interesting scenes of history are those which have elapsed since the christian æra. Of this period, some epochas, better recorded than the

* Letters on chivalry and romance, p. 289.

the rest, less require a new elucidation. The elegant historian, whose work has suggested these reflections, is fortunate and judicious in the choice of his subject; * than which few are more interesting, few less investigated by judicious writers. The amplitude and the dismembering of the greatest empire that ever existed; and the foundation of the modern kingdoms erected on its stupendous ruins; is as august a theme as the human mind can comprehend or execute. Contrary to the opinion of most lovers and readers of history, I think this subject grows more interesting in every step of its progress.

—————Res componere gestas,
Terrarum situs et flumina dicere, et arces
Montibus impositas, et BARBARA REGNA—

are themes which interest the coldest reader, while they animate the genius of a writer. Some applauded authors have shewn us of late, that the feudal times and manners are susceptible of the most lively painting. I have already expressed my wish, to see that long period of civil and ecclesiastical affairs which is included in the dominion of the papacy, impartially and clearly stated.

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* See his Preface.

I pass over the important æra of the reformation, because it has been the subject of good historians, in the several protestant communions. Burnet, the Eusebius of the English church, has placed her reformation in such a light, as for ever to secure us from relapsing into popery. One of the most extraordinary men in Europe, M. le Courayer (having seen a whole age of history, as a living evidence) has modernized and improved the best historian of that period, the celebrated father Paul, who supports the reformation by the unequivocal testimony of a Romish ecclesiastic. This subject being so well treated by the historians of all communions; the most new and the most curious topic of narration, is the history of our own age, the annals of the eighteenth century. This period, which has given a new face to civil society; many real improvements blended with some peculiar infelicities; calls for the most accomplished talents, and the best advantages of an historian: access to records; dignity and independence; knowledge of the world, of courts, and policy; acquaintance with the theory of war, of commerce, and the arts; enlarged ideas of the extent and advancement of science; and above all, a candid, philosophic, and religious spirit, to investigate the principles of the present age, and to direct

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rect them to the great objects of society, Christian truth and general happiness.

Polybius observes, that he was influenced in the choice of his subject, by its commencing from a new æra, when the springs and causes of public events were distinct from those of the preceding period. He repeats this observation more than once, on occasion of the death of several Princes concurring in the same period, so as to form a new epocha for their successors.

Both these circumstances remarkably distinguish the conclusion of the last and beginning of the present century. The year one thousand seven hundred was signalized by a memorable change in the civil and ecclesiastical state of Europe, in great measure occasioned by the death of eminent persons, who in a manner disappear at once, and leave a vacant scene for new actors. In that year died the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, whose demise occasioned the second partition-treaty, for the dismembering of the Spanish monarchy. The death of William Duke of Gloucester, July 30, happily fixed the succession of these kingdoms in a protestant line, the august house of Brunswick. In September, died Pope Innocent XII. and his successor Clement XI opened the way to new discussions
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of the great questions in theology, respecting Quietism, Jansenism, and the loose morality of the Jesuites. The conclusion of the last age is memorable for the death of Don Carlos II. King of Spain, November 1st, in the 36th year of his reign. Incensed at the partition of his dominions, concerted by king William III. and the states of Holland, he, by his last will, bequeathed his crown to Philip, Duke of Anjou, who was declared king of Spain, by the court of France. In the northern kingdoms, this active period brought on the scene two princes, a parallel for the heroes of antiquity. November 30th, 1700, the young king of Sweden with 8000 men, gained the battle of Narva, against 80000 Russians, led by the rival of his glory Peter the Great. Providence exemplified in these princes the superiority of the spirit of legislation, over the spirit of conquest. Lastly, with the new age commenced the kingdom of Prussia: and soon after, within half a year of each other, died the two rival kings, James II. with the genius of the cloister; William III. with the character of a great politician, a consummate general, and the deliverer of Europe.

Lord Bolingbroke, a capable judge of those events, thus illustrates this epocha, in his
 sketch

sketch of the history and state of Europe.*
 I abridge his lordship's detail, but avail my-
 self of his style and sentiments. ' The ob-
 ' jects proposed by the alliance of 1689, be-
 ' tween the emperor and the states, to
 ' which England acceded--were, to restore all
 ' things to the terms of the Westphalian and
 ' Pyrenean treaties, [in 1648 and 1659].
 ' England and Holland, by a separate article
 ' obliged themselves to assist the house of
 ' Austria, in taking and keeping possession
 ' of the Spanish monarchy, on the death
 ' of Charles II. The princes and states,
 ' who had neglected or favoured the growth
 ' of the power of France, saw, that unless
 ' they could check that power, by unit-
 ' ing a power superiour to hers, it would be
 ' impossible to hinder her from accomplish-
 ' ing her great designs on the Spanish suc-
 ' cession. King William, by consenting to a
 ' partition of their monarchy, threw the Spa-
 ' niards into the arms of France. The first
 ' partition might have taken place, perhaps,
 ' if the Electoral prince of Bavaria had lived,
 ' whom the French and Spaniards too would
 ' have

* *Letter VIII. on the study and use of history.* I have
 recourse to his lordship's authority, merely in a literary view.
 Those who would see a discussion of his principles and politics,
 may consult Dr. Leland's reflections on those letters. part III.
 Lond. 1753. 8vo.

‘ have seen much more willingly than the
‘ Archduke on the throne of Spain. For
‘ among all the parties into which that
‘ court was divided in 1698, when this treaty
‘ was made, that of Austria was grown the
‘ weakest. The electoral prince died in
‘ 1700. The star of Austria prevailed.
‘ The state of things changed very much by
‘ the Elector’s death. The Archduke was to
‘ have Spain and the Indies, according to
‘ a second partition; and the Spaniards,
‘ who had expressed great resentment at the
‘ first, were pushed beyond their bearing by
‘ this. They soon appeared to be so; for
‘ the second treaty of partition was signed
‘ in March 1700, and the will was made
‘ in the October following.’ His lordship
continues his summary of this later period of
modern history, in a very instructive man-
ner. I select such passages only, as concur
with my design, of distributing all history,
under a few distinct and interesting epochas.
‘ The actors changed their parts in the tra-
‘ gedy that followed: the power that had
‘ so long and so cruelly attacked, was now
‘ to defend the Spanish monarchy. That
‘ we may make a better judgment of all that
‘ passed from the death of Charles II. to the
‘ peace of Utrecht, let us go back to the time
‘ of his death, and consider the circumstances,
‘ that

‘ that formed this complicated state of affairs,
 ‘ in three views, a view of right, a view of
 ‘ policy, and a view of power.’

‘ The object of the war, which king Wil-
 ‘ liam meditated, and queen Anne waged, was
 ‘ a partition, by which a prince of the house of
 ‘ Bourbon, already acknowledged by us and
 ‘ the Dutch, as king of Spain, was to be left
 ‘ on the throne of that dismembered mo-
 ‘ narchy. The wisdom of those councils
 ‘ saw, that the peace of Europe might be
 ‘ restored and secured on this foot; and that
 ‘ the liberties of Europe would be in no dan-
 ‘ ger.’

‘ The alliances were concluded, the quo-
 ‘ tas were settled, and the season for tak-
 ‘ ing the field approached, when king
 ‘ William died. Notwithstanding the ill
 ‘ success with which he made war, he was
 ‘ looked upon as the sole centre of uni-
 ‘ on, that could keep together the greatest
 ‘ confederacy then forming. By his death,
 ‘ the duke of Marlborough was raised to
 ‘ the head of the army, and indeed of the
 ‘ confederacy; where he, a new, a private
 ‘ man, a subject, acquired by merit and by
 ‘ management, a more deciding influence,
 ‘ than high birth, confirmed authority, and
 ‘ even the crown of Great Britain, had giv-
 ‘ en to king William.’ His lordship’s rea-
 sons

sons against the continuance of that glorious war, after the year 1706, appear to be very conclusive, and full of political instruction: and he ingenuously allows, ‘ that the peace of Utrecht in 1713 was not answerable to the success of the war.’ Yet it is diverting, if the subject was not exceeding serious, to hear those eloquent invectives, at the close of his eighth letter, against that luxury, corruption, and irreligion, and those infringements of the constitution in church and state, which were introduced and supported by the very examples writings, which his lordship at once condemned and authorised.

In his very short but judicious plan for a general history of Europe, his lordship expresses with precision, the idea I have often entertained of an history of the present age. ‘ There is hardly any century in history which began by opening so great a scene, as the century wherein we live, and shall, I suppose, die. Compare it with others, even the most famous, and you will think so.’ ‘ The last great act of cardinal Mazarin’s administration, was the Pyrenean treaty, [in 1659]. Here I would begin, by representing the face of Europe, such as it was at that epocha: the interests and the conduct of England, France, Spain, Holland,

' land, and the empire.—After this, ano-
 ' ther draught of Europe should have its
 ' place, according to the relations, which
 ' the several powers stood in, one towards
 ' another, in 1688: and the alterations,
 ' which the revolution in England made in
 ' the politics of Europe. A summary ac-
 ' count should follow, of the events of the
 ' war that ended in 1697, with the different
 ' views of king William III. and Lewis
 ' XIV. in making the peace of Ryfwic.
 ' Then, the dispositions made by the par-
 ' tition treaties, and the influences and con-
 ' sequences of these treaties; and a third
 ' draught of the state of Europe, at the
 ' death of Charles II. of Spain. All this
 ' would make the subject of one or two
 ' books, and would be the most proper in-
 ' troduction imaginable to an history of that
 ' war, with which our century began, and
 ' of the peace which followed.'

' This war, foreseen for above half a cen-
 ' tury, had been, during all that time, the
 ' great and constant object of the councils of
 ' Europe. The prize to be contended for
 ' was the richest that ever had been staked,
 ' since those of the Persian and Roman em-
 ' pires. The union of two powers, which,
 ' separately, and in opposition, had aimed at
 ' universal monarchy, was apprehended.'

You

You will be pleased, my friend, with this large extract from so fine a writer, on a topic with which he must have been well acquainted. It falls in with the design of these papers, to propose such thoughts on historic composition, as may regulate our application and produce the best fruits of this study. And I have insisted the more on this period of general history, because no good writers, at least of our own nation, have hitherto adventured on a subject so interesting to us.

I proceed to some considerations on the style of history. Our English writers seem, till of late, to have resembled those annalists, who had attempted to record the Roman affairs before the age of Cicero. His fine observations on this subject serve to remind us what has been the state of historic composition among us; till our own times had given us a few names worthy to be compared with the best ancients. In Robertson and in Hume, we may trace some resemblance of Livy and Tacitus: of Polybius, in the learned and virtuous Lord Lyttleton: and we should have acknowledged their united excellencies in this new work, had its author been as attentive to its principles and structure, as to its style and decorations.

The style of history may be ascertained from its end and design, of preserving the records
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of past transactions. As such, it is properly an address to the memory : and its distinction in point of style, can be no other than that perspicuity, which results from a due medium between the austere and sententious manner, and the florid or figurative. The first is fitted for abstraction and close reasoning ; the second for works of imagination. The historic style is therefore that, which, between the two extremes, admits of the precision of the one, without its severity ; of the grace and ornament of the other, without its luxuriance. Dionysius, who has so exactly distinguished the several modes of composition, expresses this idea, in his definition of what he terms the common, middle, or temperate style : which results, either from its exemption from the two extremes before-mentioned, or from a due mixture of both, admitting of several gradations or approaches either to the florid or austere. Of this temperament the most perfect examples are Homer and Herodotus, in the opinion of this eminent critic, whose own style, especially in his Roman antiquities, is prolix and redundant. The best example I know of this kind, is Livy among the ancients, of the moderns M. Rollin and Dr. Robertson. Livy alone avoids that sameness, which is its usual blemish : he has the happy art of varying
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without changing his style, and of keeping our attention awake, by passages of uncommon animation and eloquent expression, interspersed throughout his narrative, wherever the subject suggested them to his clear and bright imagination.

The moderns, who compile from unclassical and even barbarous memoirs, have the advantage over those who copy from great models. The latter can rarely emulate the native graces of Herodotus or Xenophon, or transfuse into a copy the majesty of Livy or the strength of Thucydides. But a writer of imagination, who compiles from the Augustan, the Ecclesiastical, or Byzantine historians, refines and improves on his less elegant originals, and extracts from barbarism itself an interesting and delightful narrative.

On the form or method of narration, shall I not hazard some censure of inelegance, if I prefer to the brilliant and desultory manner, which the French have introduced, of writing memoirs and detached incidents, a strict regard to order of time and authenticity of evidence, in the plainer and more instructive form of annals? Such annals I mean, as do not exclude reflection, sentiment, and colouring: such, in a word, as those of Livy and of Tacitus. These great masters seldom violate the natural order of events. The latter,

ter, in his Tiberius, has given a perfect model of historic annals, diversified with the deepest reflections, and with every ornament of composition, without deviating from an exact chronology. The ancients, who are generally defective in method on subjects of philosophy, in history adopt a clear and natural arrangement both of time and place.

The modern history, which is founded on the basis of negociations, treaties and other state-papers, excludes that eloquence which decided every thing in the ancient democracies, and does not easily admit of that elevation and air of heroism, which is so congenial to antiquity. But it compensates for these disadvantages, by being more applicable to the business of real life, and by admitting of the most exact veracity. The ecclesiastical part, besides the acts and proceedings of synods and councils, includes much of the literary history of these late ages: a subject curious in itself, and interesting to all to whom church history itself is interesting.

On the erudition of an historian, we may observe, that, except those few eminent persons who have recorded their own actions, or those in which they were consulted or employed, all historians are properly compilers, and collect their materials from the accounts of others. In the first class of men

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and of writers, are those who have recorded events, in which they were themselves principals or agents. Few, even of the ancients, have this distinction. Moses, Thucydides, Xenophon, Cæsar, Cicero, the Evangelists, were eye-witnesses or instruments in the events they have related. For this reason, I regret the loss of such memoirs, as those of Sylla the dictator, of Theophanes the friend of Pompey, of Cicero's anecdotes, and some others of that learned age. But time which preserves on its surface so many light and trivial records, has suffered these weighty memoirs to sink into oblivion.

The only way of supplying the defect of what we may name experimental history, written by agents and contemporaries, is that of faithful compilation. In this province, it is the duty of a writer to go to the sources of information, to distinguish authenticity from error and prejudice, and to make his readers the judges of his fidelity, by alleging his authorities with a scrupulous exactness. Without this last precaution, the most eloquent and even judicious historian deprives himself of much of that credibility, which is of the essence of his character. Yet some late writers, by an affectation which can deceive none but themselves, would be supposed personally acquainted with transactions, either
so

so remote or so secret, as to be in their own nature inaccessible to recluse and private men. Let facts then rest on their proper basis, either of personal knowledge or of authentic records; and let every mist of deception be dispersed by the radiance of historic truth.

A solid judgment and a philosophic spirit is an essential, rarely to be found in any eminent degree. It consists in an happy union of sagacity and simplicity. A certain *droiture* and integrity of heart, which forms an equitable opinion of men and actions, will lead the candid, the impartial historian to state facts with precision, to forbear invective or dark insinuation, to extenuate rather than aggravate human crimes and miseries. The worst actions of a Tiberius or a Nero, a Phocas or Andronicus, give more salutary impressions when stated by so dispassionate a writer as Suetonius; than when tragically set off with all the pathos and exclamation of the later Greeks. One of the greatest of political historians is justly censurable for ascribing good actions to ill motives: it is more becoming human imbecillity, to assign reasons of expedience, of supposed necessity or seeming utility, to account for systems of conduct not defensible on higher and purer maxims.

The principles of an historian are of much
more

more importance, than either his style or method, his erudition or sagacity. The most expressive encomium of history is that of Diodorus, who styles her the oracle of truth, the metropolis of philosophy: ideas, which require in her heralds and interpreters, a corresponding elevation of mind and purity of principle.

———Est operæ pretium cognoscere, quales
Ædituos habeat belli spectata domique
Virtus———

The legitimate principles of an historian must be determined by the ends and uses of history, itself. ‘ The only subjects worth
‘ a wise man’s serious notice, are religion
‘ and government, both ordained to one
‘ end, to perfect humanity.

‘ True faith, true policy, united ran;
‘ That was but love of God, and this of man.’*

These great and comprehensive principles are to be found in concert in so few historians; as to excite our wonder at that perversity of the human mind, which misleads the most eminent among the moderns, as well as ancients, into false or imperfect ends.

Among

* Dedication of the alliance between church and state.

Among the ancients, Herodotus adopted the principle of his poetic archetypes, and chiefly aimed at a more instructive kind of amusement. Thucydides, intending the union of Greece as the moral of his work, distinguishes it from that of his predecessor, by styling the one a mere trial of skill or transient entertainment, the other a monument of truth and a possession for eternity. Xenophon, blending the merits of both, gives an equitable system of philosophic polity in the paternal character of Cyrus, which is in a great measure formed on the maxims of Socrates. In his continuation of Thucydides, and his expedition of the young Cyrus, he might perhaps intend to teach the Greeks the practicability of their favourite enterprize the conquest of Persia.

Josephus meant to write an apology for his countrymen, and conceals some truths which would have injured their national character.

Polybius and Dionysius honestly wished to make the Greeks contented under the Roman government; the former evinces the expediency of their subjection to so powerful a republic; the later soothes the pride of his nation, by deriving from them the origin of Rome itself, its laws, and institutions. Dion with baser views, meant to rivet the
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the Cefarean despotism, by aspersing the fame and virtues of the old republicans.

Of all the ancients, none seem to have formed nobler views, than Livy and Diodorus. The moral of the latter, which he often repeats, is political moderation, and that equitable system, which makes government sit light and easy on a willing people. Livy extols the virtues of the republic, as exemplary to the new government and to mankind in general : but he is too panegyric on the spirit of conquest, which is so irreconcilable to the principles of natural justice. Others of the Roman authors had less generous views. Sallust wrote his elaborate pieces with a party-spirit, to asperse the senate, and extol the popular faction, which sacrificed the commonwealth to Cesar's ambition. Cesar himself meant only to give lustre to his name, and some colour of justice to his usurpation, by his elegant and partial commentaries. Tacitus had an object in view, worthy of his great capacity ; to mitigate the imperial government, by drawing in strong colours its frightful excesses. Appian, like an honest man, condemns the successful cruelties on which that government was established ; and teaches the great lesson of civil history, legal subjection and authority, by shewing that
the

the extremes of faction tend to produce the extremes of power.

The several ends of writing here enumerated, more or less perfect, are excusable on the principles of their respective times. Since the christian æra, historians enlightened by its maxims, might have formed the most exalted ideas of their office, had not either superstition or impiety supplanted religion. The historians of the Popish party have been always more solicitous to aggrandize the church, than to advance religion or society. The temporal grandeur of the holy see, was the sole object of a Baronius and a Bossuet. Others of that communion still more ignobly meant to recommend its superstitions, by fabulous martyrdoms, relics, miracles, and every species of dotage and credulity. The protestant historians, smarting under the Gallic persecution, nobly vindicate the rights of conscience, sometimes with too much sensibility, and in a spirit of recrimination. Bishop Burnet, in his immortal history of the reformation, has fixed the protestant religion in this country, as long as any religion remains among us. Give me leave to cite in this place, a passage from the introduction to his third volume, in which the author expresses the true ends of church history.

history. ‘ Can it be possible, that any are
‘ so depraved, as to wish we had no religion
‘ at all, or to be enemies to the Christian
‘ religion?—Religion has so much to strug-
‘ gle with, that if it is not believed to be
‘ revealed by God, it will not have strength
‘ enough to resist those ill inclinations, those
‘ appetites and passions, that are apt to rise
‘ up in our minds against its dictates. What
‘ is there in the true and unsophisticated
‘ Christian religion, that can give a colour
‘ to prejudices against it? The whole com-
‘ plex of that rule of life which it pre-
‘ scribes, is so plainly suited to our compo-
‘ sition, both in our souls and their facul-
‘ ties; and in our bodies, with relation to
‘ good health, to industry, and long life;
‘ and to all the interests of human society,
‘ to the order and peace of the world, and
‘ to the truth and love that are the cements
‘ and securities of the body politick; that
‘ without any laboured proof of its divine
‘ original, these are such characters, that
‘ they may serve to prove, it is sent into the
‘ world by a lover of mankind, who knew
‘ our nature, and what was proper both to
‘ perfect it, and to render it not only safe
‘ but happy.—As for those, that do truly
‘ believe this religion, and have an inge-
‘ nuous sense and taste of liberty; can they
‘ admit

‘ admit a comparison to be made, between
 ‘ a religion restrained to a fixed standard,
 ‘ and that which sets up another uncertain
 ‘ standard, of which they pretend to be the
 ‘ depositaries, I mean, traditions; and pre-
 ‘ tend farther, they are the infallible ex-
 ‘ pounders of it; and that the true standard
 ‘ itself, is not to be exposed to common
 ‘ view? that God is to be worshipped in a
 ‘ language not understood; that instead of a
 ‘ competent provision to those who labour
 ‘ in this work, the head of them is to be-
 ‘ come a great Prince, and may pretend to
 ‘ a power to dispose of kingdoms and states,
 ‘ to pardon sins, and to redeem sinners out
 ‘ of the miseries of a future state:—and
 ‘ who, by these means, have possessed them-
 ‘ selves of an immense wealth, and a vast
 ‘ authority.’ This passage of bishop Burnet,
 together with the admirable conclusion of
 the history of his own times, serve to ex-
 press those noble ends and intentions, which
 our English historians ought to propose to
 themselves; the preservation of both parts
 of our constitution, and the reformation of
 our manners.

What censure, therefore, is not due, my
 friend, even from candour bright as yours,
 to those popular historians of this fortunate
 island, who have made it their aim and ob-
 ject,

ject, by opposite extremes, to set the people at variance with their religion and government? One, chagrined by disappointed ambition, in all his writings declares open war with the Christian religion; and in his fashionable history, while he defames our ecclesiastical constitution, would authorize despotism by ancient precedent. Another in direct contradiction advances a new political system, adores the populace, and extols a republican usurpation. A third, with a more flagrant misapplication of superior talents, insults Christianity in her most hallowed sanctuary, the primitive church; at the tombs of martyrs, and before the gleaming fires of persecution, he arraigns her of folly, error and perverseness; and wonders, that she should not sacrifice her prudish principles before the shrines of Grecian elegance and Roman magnificence.

The only objects worthy of a protestant historian, on whatever subject he may employ his talents, are the purity of religion, and the interests of civil society. Evangelical Christianity, and equitable government, constitute public and private happiness. To asperse the first in favour of irreligion, is to injure the rights of conscience. To asperse the second, either in favour of faction, or of unlawful power, is to trample on our
civil

civil rights ; which can only be secured by a quiet and cheerful subjection to a mild and legal authority.

Having said so much of history on my own ideas, it may be proper to add some thoughts on its benefits and effects. The fruits of this science are indeed as various, as the incidents it records. The philosopher, the divine, the statesman, the philologer, the man of leisure, all find in it their respective advantages. But its utility, various and extensive as it is, may be reduced to certain general objects, worthy of the attention of those who study it, especially in its original writers.

1. Its first and noblest use is in the evidence and illustration it affords to revealed religion, from collateral proofs, and the completion of its prophecies. The ancient and even the modern historians are in this view the best interpreters of Holy Scripture; whose incidental conformity with coëval manners and customs, even in the minutest circumstances, is a demonstration of its authenticity: and the historical completion of its predictions, enlightens and convinces the serious enquirer into the proofs of its inspiration.

2. The false religion of mankind, with all its absurdities, is more faithfully recorded by historians, than by poets or philosophers.

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The picture they have given us of polytheism and idolatry is such a contrast to the refined principles of revelation, as at once evinces both its excellence and its necessity

3. Political instruction is best learned in the school of history. Here I again avail myself of the good-sense of bishop Burnet, who, in the conclusion to the history of his own times, points out with accuracy the chief objects of political observations on history.

‘ The ancient government in Greece, but
 ‘ much more that of Rome, must be mi-
 ‘ nutely delivered, that the difference be-
 ‘ tween a just and a vicious government
 ‘ may be well apprehended. The fall of
 ‘ the Roman greatness, under the emperors,
 ‘ by reason of the absolute power, that let
 ‘ vice in upon them, which corrupted not
 ‘ only their courts, but their armies ; ought
 ‘ to be fully opened. Then, the Gothick
 ‘ government and the feudal law, should be
 ‘ clearly explained, to open the original of
 ‘ our own constitution. In all this, the
 ‘ chief care ought to be, to possess the mind
 ‘ with noble principles of justice, liberty,
 ‘ and virtue, as the true basis of govern-
 ‘ ment; and with an aversion to violence
 ‘ and arbitrary power, servile flattery, fac-
 ‘ tion, and luxury, from which the corruption
 ‘ and ruin of all governments have arisen.’

Man-

Manners, laws, and institutions, for the advancement of society, are worthy of our best attention. To collections of this kind, we are obliged for that humane and almost christian system, *L'Esprit des loix*, the result of twenty years of application to the noblest object, the happiness of mankind.

4. In this view, not only the speculative maxims which belong to the preceding article, but those acts of clemency and true heroism deserve our special notice; those humane, and equitable, and magnanimous traits of character and conduct; which relieve the mind, amidst the crimes and sufferings and perpetual wars, which history records even to satiety:

Wars, hitherto the only argument

Heroic deem'd:—the better fortitude

Of patience and heroic martyrdom

Unsung. ————— P. L. IX. 28.

Maxims of the highest moment, are the result of the foregoing collections on true and false religion, and on the political and moral spirit of government. From history thus applied, results the acknowledgment of a moral providence over the affairs of men; and of a divine administration or theocracy over the affairs of Christian states. Hence,
Christian

Christian polity, both in its civil and ecclesiastical department, is properly a part of the religion; and, as such, ought to be administered on the maxims of the religion, with the utmost attainable purity and rectitude. Civil governors are styled in scripture, God's Ministers, because they are appointed to carry into execution the maxims of a divine polity. A religious acquiescence in the civil state of the world; an inflexible personal integrity; and a zeal to promote the public good, are the duties of Christian subjects. History, as it teaches those in authority, that true principles of government are also useful ones, so it teaches the people that they live under a providential administration. If the people violate the maxims of christian polity, this divine government will be administered in a punishing or vindictive way. The true remedy for public evils, is always in the people's own hands; reformation, or a recovery from that apostacy in principle, and licence in manners, which induce disorder into states. In the mean time, history teaches, how unskilfully as well as perversely, men engage in factions and murmurs at their own times; whose public evils are always, perhaps exactly, commensurate to the sum or aggregate of public vice. Hence, there is no period in the annals of mankind, which

which hath not afforded sufficient causes, not for discontent, but for emendation. Mankind, instead of looking into themselves for the causes of calamity, irritate their political feelings, by invectives against that power, which is always a blessing or a chastisement to society, proportioned to their public good or ill desert.

Thus, my friend, history assumes a sacred and august character, that of an instructress of rulers and nations. She teaches the first to stand in awe of her tribunal: she teaches the dire effects of vice and irreligion. She throws a lasting glory over the honoured names of magnanimous and good kings; she embalms the memory of virtuous patriots; and exhibits sovereignty and patriotism acting in concert for the public good; while the ecclesiastical establishment comes in aid of the civil, and strengthens the laws by the bands of conscience and religion.

But it is time to descend from this rapture of public spirit, into the expressions of private friendship; and to subscribe myself, with all sincerity and true esteem,

Your faithful

and obedient Servant.

REMARKS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

A methodized catalogue of original historians (which I had attempted for my own instruction) would be too large for this place; and would detain me too long from the principal design of these letters. The following brief remarks are selected or verified from the best guides in this study, the IVth volume of the works of Vossius, the Bibliothèques of Fabricius, Du Fresnoy's method of studying history, chronology and geography, Walch's Bibliotheca theologica, vol. III. &c.

For the defects of this contracted plan, I apologize with Muretus, V. L. II. 16. *beatos illos esse ducens, quibus amplæ illæ ac nobiles bibliothecæ patent, ubi tam laute, tam copiose, tam splendide, pascere animos suos hoc genere epularum queunt. Nos tenuiores victitamus ut possumus, neque invidemus aliis fortunam suam: sed, ut eadem nobis quoque aliquando contingat, optamus.*

II.

Strabo, to vindicate the historic credit of his favourite Homer, derives the origin of history from poetry. Lib. I. p. 34. *Ὁ περὶ λόγος, ὅγε κατεσκευασμένος, μίμημα τοῦ ποιητικοῦ ἐστίν. πρῶτιστά γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ κατασκευὴ παρῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ εὐδοκίμησεν. εἶτα ἐκείνην μιμουμένοι, λυσάντες τὸ μέτρον, τ' ἄλλα δὲ φυλαξάντες τὰ ποιητικά, συνεγράψαν οἱ περὶ Κάδμου καὶ Φερεκύδην καὶ Ἑκαταίον. εἶτα οἱ ὑγέρον, ἀφαιρουντες αἰετὶ τῶν τοιούτων, εἰς τὸ νῦν εἶδος κατήγαγον, ὥς ἂν ἀπὸ ὕψους τινας.* 'Artificial composition in prose is an imitation of the poetic. Poetical composition first appeared, and was applauded. Cadmus, Pherecydes, Hecataeus, imitating poesy, preserved all its embellishments except the versification, and gave the first specimens of history. Those who succeeded them, continued to divest their composition more and more of poetic ornaments, and brought it down to its present form, from its original sublimity.' This account of the origin of history, is perfectly agreeable to what we find in the books of Moses; who probably was the first
who

who wrote in prose, or used an alphabetic character. This most ancient of historians, himself perpetuates the memory of some signal events, in poems truly divine: Exod. xv. Deut. xxxii. xxxiii. and cites poetic memoirs as historic evidence. See Numb. xxi. in Dr. Kennicott's invaluable edition of the Hebrew bible, in which the poetic passages are judiciously measured in hemistichs. Bishop Lowth with great elegance has shewn the high antiquity of poetry, which was employed in constructing the laws and annals of the northern as well as eastern nations. De sacra poesi Hebr. præf. iv. p. 73. where his lordship's annotator observes, 'Scandinavia et Islandia laudes heroum et antiquissimarum rerum memoriam carminibus in hunc usque diem servatis debet.' Consult Pelloutier, hist. des Celtes, liv. II. ch. x. xi. Bp. Nicholson, Eng. hist. libr. 1714. p. 51. Perizonius, animadv. hist. c. vi.

That the poems of Homer are founded on true history, is largely proved by Strabo, p. 37. *Εκενος ταις ἀληθεσι περιπετειαις προσεπιτίθει μυθον ἡδυνων κ' κοσμων την φρασιν. Οὕτω δη, τοντε Ιλιακον πολεμον γεγονοτα παρχλαβων, εκοσμησε ταις μυθοποιαις κ' την Οδυσσειαν πλανην ὡσαυτως.* 'Homer adds the decoration of fable to the truth of history, adorning both with the sweetness of poetic diction. The war of Troy, and the voyages of Ulysses, are historic facts, embellished with the fictions of poetry.' The historic materials of the Iliad are collected by Dupin, bibliothéque des hist. p. 85-94, Homere, poete et historien: and his character in both respects is excellently developed in the enquiry into the life and writings of Homer, Lond. 1735. 8.

Bishop Warburton, D. L. iv. 5. p. 308, has a judicious observation, to explain what Homer means, by the invocation of the Muses, and the language of the Gods. He collected his materials from the old songs and poems of his predecessors; and the old names of persons and things in those poems are called by Homer, the names used by the Immortals, as they were of use in the first heroic ages, and as they were of barbarous and Egyptian original, from whence came the mythologic history of the gods. Iliad. i. 403. ii. 484-492. 813. *το μεν προτερον ὄνομα, says the scholiast on i. 403, εις θεους ἀναφερει, το δε δευτερον εις ανθρωπους.*

III.

The GREEK TRAGEDIES, disposed in order of time, including the history of the Fabulous Ages.

Thespis fl. Olymp. lxi.—Æschylus lxxiii.—Sophocles lxxvii.—Euripides lxxix.—v. Fabric. B. G. l. ii. c. 16—19. Fragmenta Tragicorum (de quibus, Fabric. c. 19.) edidit H. Grotius, 1626. 4.—Gataker. obs. posth. cap. x.—Jo. Miltoni ineditas ad Euripid. observationes subindé laudat Barnesius.—v. Reineccii regnum Thebanum. tom. i. ubi multa eruditè collecta de hist. mythica. Apollodorus. Diod. Sic. l. i—v. Aristot. de Poetica. c. 27.—Brumoy, theatre des Grecs.

A. M. ante Ch.

- 2418—1585. Prometheus, Æschyli. media ex tribus, v. Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. ii. c. 10.
- 2532—1471. Supplices, Æsch.
- 2566—1437. Ion, Euripidis. v. Scalig. ad Varron. p. 94.
- 2645—1358. Danae, Frag. Euripid. conf. Simonid. ap. Dions. π. συγ. §. 26.
- 2674—1329. Bacchæ, Eurip. Tzetz. vi. 61. Scalig. p. 88.
- 2753—1250. Medea, Eurip. et Senecæ. Scalig. p. 92. 99. Mem. de l'acad. xi. 378.
- 2798—1205. Hippolytus, Eurip. Mem. xi. 465.
- Alceſtis, Eurip. Scalig. p. 114.
- 2759—1244. Hercules furens, Eurip. et Senecæ.
- 2788—1215. Trachiniæ, Sophoclis. Senecæ Hercules Oeteus.
- 2785—1218. Oedipus tyrannus, Sophocl. et Senecæ. Mem. de l'Acad. viii. 587.
- 2785—1218. Septem ad Thebas, Æschyli. Δεσποα Αγεος μετον Aristoph. in ranis, iv. 2.
- 2785—1218. Phoenissæ, Euripidis.
- 2785—1218. Oedipus Coloneus, Sophocl. Hist. de l'Acad. iii. 117. Mem. viii. 607. xi. 314.
- 2785—1218. Antigone, Sophocl. Bp. Hurd. on Hor. A. P. v. 196.

- 2785—1218. Supplices, Euripid. Seneca. Statius.
 2812—1191. Iphigenia in Aulide, Eurip. Mem. de l'Acad.
 xi: 447.
 2820—1183. Rhesus, Eurip. Mem. de l'Acad. xiv. 509. &
 Scalig. ad Manil. præf.
 2821—1182. Ajax, Sophoclis.
 2821—1182. Philoctetes, Sophoclis. Fenelon. Telem. l. xv.
 2822—1181. Troades, Eurip.
 2823—1180. Hecuba, Eurip.
 2801—1202. Heraclidæ, Eurip.
 2822—1181. Agamemnon, Æsch. Mem. xi. 350. de l'Acad.
 2829—1174. Choephoræ Æsch.
 Cyclops, Eurip. unicum quod extat drama Sa-
 tyricum. v. Casaub. de Satira Græc. &
 Rom. 1606.
 2829—1174. Electra, Sophocl.
 2829—1174. Electra, Eurip. Bp. Hurd. note on Hor. A. P.
 v. 127. 317.
 2829—1174. Orestes, Eurip.
 2829—1174. Eumenides, Æsch.
 2833—1170. Andromache, Eurip. Mem. de l'Acad. xi. 410.
 xiv. 490.
 2834—1169. Iphigenia Taurica, Eurip.
 2828—1175. Helena, Eurip.
 3525—478. Persæ, Æschyli.
 2810—1193. Lycophron's Cassandra, which is placed here,
ex Simsoni as including the whole poetical history, in
Chronico. an animated tragic monody.

IV.

An applauded abridgment of the English universal history ancient and modern, by J. C. Gatterers, was published at Gottingen, 1761. 8. *breviarium archetypo in haud paucis præstantius*, says the author of an academical dissertation, *de historiæ universalis apud Græcos, Romanosque et nostros scriptores diversa ratione*: Goetting. 1764. ' *Historia universalis in antiquam et recentem describi solet. Illa hoc modo est explicata, ut, tradita prius ipsius historiæ ejusque scriptorum notitia, 1. historia ante diluvionem communem narretur; 2. transeat*

transeat ad Patriarcharum variam fortunam usque ad Abrahami tempora ; 3. cumque hac Judæorum res gestæ conjungantur, et usque ad excidium fugamque eorum Hierosolymitanam continentur. Inducuntur deinde cæteri populi, ut, 4. illi, qui proximi fuerunt Judæorum ; Moabitæ, Ammonitæ, Midianitæ, Edomitæ, Amalekitæ, Cananitæ, Philistæi ; 5. Ægyptii ; 6. Syri ; 7. Phoenices ; 8. Babylonii, Assyrii, Medi ; 9. Persæ ; 10. ingentes nationes Celtarum atque Scytharum ; 11. Phryges, Trojani, Mysii, Lydi, Lycii, Cilices ; 12. Arabes usque ad tempora Muhamedis, horumque diversa regna ; 13. Indi ante quam victi a Muhamede Gazia fuissent ; 14. Græci, eorumque singula regna et respublicæ ; 15. Macedones, et cum eis varia Asiæ regna Ponti, Pergami, Bithyniæ, Paphlagoniæ, Cappadociæ, Gallogræciæ, Armeniæ utriusque, Parthiæ ; 16. Carthaginenses ; 17. Romani. 18. Christiani.

Hæc vero, quæ præsentium regnorum origines resque gestas tradit, hunc servat ordinem, ut, rursus præmissa isagoge et historicorum indice, describantur 1. Chinenses, 2. Coreani, 3. Tibetani, 4. Japani, 5. Moguli Tartarique, 6. Indi, 7. Arabes, 8. Persæ, 9. Kurdæ, 10. Imperia Augustorum in Oriente, 11. communes illæ gentium migrationes, unde plerique hodie Europæ populi conflati ; quibus illustratis, earum nationum quæ inde derivatæ sunt, historia traditur : 12. Germanorum, quæ dicitur Imperii, 13. Ungarorum Boemorumque, 14. Helvetorum ; 15. Belgarum ; 16. Italorum, eorumque variorum regnorum ; accedit Pontificum Rom. imperium ; 17. Christianorum a sexto inde seculo ; 18. Persarum, medio recentique ævo ; 19. Turcarum ; 20. Russorum ; 21. Hispanorum ; 22. Lusitanorum ; 23. Gallo-Francorum ; 24. Britannorum ; 25. Danorum Norwegicorumque ; 26. Suecorum ; 27. Polonorum ; 28. Borussorum. Quibus absolutis, additur 29. Afrorum ; 30. Americanorumque historia.

V.

GEOGRAPHY. Fabric. B. G. iv. 14. et bibliog. ant. c. 5.

Strabo, 1707. f. v. Cleric. B. C. xii. 386. Abr. Gronov. in variis geographicis, L. Bat. 1739. 8. et Obss. Miscæ.

Misc. vol. II—Ptolemæus, 1618. f.—Stephanus Byz. 1694. f. Luca Holstenii notæ in Steph. Byz. 1684. f. et in Misc. Obs. II. 117—Geographi Græci minores; Oxon. 1698—1712 tom. I. Hanno. Scylax, Agatharchides, Arriani periplus ponti Euxini et maris Erythræi. Nearchus. Marcianus. Anonymus. tom. II. Dicæarchus, Isidorus, Scymnus, Plutarchus de fluviis, Agathemerus, Strabonis epitome. tom. III. Dionysius Byzant. Anonymus. Georgius medicus. Ptolemæi tabula longit. & latid. urbium. Ejusd. descriptio Arabiæ. &c. tom. IV. Dionysius periegetes.—Jac. Gronovii geographica antiqua: 1697. 1699. 4.—Pausanias 1696 f. par l'Abbé Gedoy. 1731. 4. 1733. 12. v. Le Clerc. B. C. xi. 133—Mela, 1722. 8. v. Misc. Obs. t. VII. VIII—C. Plinius, Hist. Nat. libb. iii. iv. v. lat. et gall. par M. Poinfinet, 1773.—Solinus, 1689. f. cum Salmasii exercit.—Vetera Rom. itineraria. edit. Wesseling. 1735. 4.

Cellarius, 1731. 4—Koeler. Norimb. 1736, 44 tabulis—Lexica, Baudrandi, 1682. 1738. f. Ortelii, 1624. 4. Hofmanni, in quo totus fere Baudrandus est insertus.

Martinieri. 1726. ix f. 1730 x. f. 1739. vi. f. Vaissette, geographie historique, ecclesiastique, et civile, Paris, 1755. xii. vol. 12.

VI.

CHRONOLOGY. Fabric. bibliogr. antiquar. c. 7.

I mention in this place such authors only, as relate to civil history in general. Jos. Scaliger, de doctrina temporum, Genev. 1629 f. opposed by Dionysius Petavius, doctr. tempp. Amst. 1703. 2 f. his rationarum tempp, Venet. 1733. 8. is preferred to all other works of this kind, by Fabricius, b. a. page 254, who adds an useful caution of Socrates against excess in these uncertain studies: ἐφ' ὅτι ταῦτα ἱκανὰ εἶναι ἀνθρώπου βίον κατατρέχειν, καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν τε καὶ ὠφελίμων μαθημάτων ἀποκωλύειν. ap. Xenoph. mem. iv.

Chronological tables—by Helvicus, 1609—Schrader, 1757. Koeler, 1736—Du Fresnoy, 1740—and Dr. Blair, 1754, which
are

are most useful and perspicuous. Edwardi Simsonii chronicon, edit. 1729, is the best guide for the ancient history: for the modern, the following work is highly commended by the foreign journalsts; 'L'art de verifier les dates des faits historiques, depuis la naissance de N. S. par le moyen d'une table chronologique, ou l'on trouve les Olympiades, les années de J. C. les indictions, le cycle pascal, solaire & lunaire, la chronologie historique des Papes, des quatre Patriarches d'orient, des empereurs Romains, Grecs, des Califes, des rois des Parthes, des Huns, des Vandales, &c. des princes d'Antioche, des comtes de Tripoli, &c. des empereurs Francois, Allemands, &c. des electeurs, &c. nouv. edition, revue et augmentée par un Religieux Benedictin. A Paris, chez Desprez, 1770, in fol. de 992 pagg.

I add on this article the sentiment of Vossius, 'In totius orbis historia, vel magni ac diuturni imperii, totiusque ecclesiæ rebus, si ordo gestorum fæde conturbetur, ne illa quidem cernimus, que videre nobis videmur—Ubi sese extulerit aureum temporum jubar, pulsas tenebris plusquam cimmeriis, clarâ omnia luce vestiuntur, inque formoso corpore omne membrorum decus apparet. Atque hoc est serenum ac splendidum illud lumen, quod in historia exigimus.'

VII.

The ASIATIC and GRECIAN HISTORY.

v. Du Fresnoy, artic. 29—34.

Vossius, de hist. græc. i. 1. iv. 1—7.

Fabric. B. antiquar. p. 283—293.

Eumelus in the ninth olympiad wrote the history of Corinth in verse. Archilochus about the twentieth, and Aristeas of Proconnesus about the fiftieth olympiad, versified the memoirs of their respective times. Pherecydes of Syros first wrote in prose on physical subjects: soon after, in the sixty-fourth olympiad, Hecatæus of Miletus and Hellanicus of Mitylene, wrote in historic prose; the former a description of Europe, the latter on the origin of nations and cities.

Both

Both led the way to Herodotus, who was but twelve years younger than Hellanicus. Cadmus the Milesian, and Acusilaus the Argive, flourished a little before the expedition of Xerxes, when Herodotus was born, and Thucydides thirteen years later. So recent is the origin of history among the Greeks. v. Jos. Antt. i. 3. §. 9. contr. Apion. i. 2. Gellius. xv. 23.

Olympiads included in the Greek Historians.

- 14—75. Herodotus.
- 75—92. Thucydides.
- 55—104. Xenophon.
- 59—94. Ctesias, apud Photium. cod. 72. Theopompus, ibid. codic. 176. Agatharchides, cod. 213. 250. Memnon, cod. 224.
- 75—120. Diodorus Siculus.
- 111—113. Plutarchus, Arrianus, Curtius, de rebus Alex. M.
- 92—121 Oratores Græci, de quorum temporibus, v. Gronov. Thes. x. 1. Olearius, in Philostrat. p. 630.

Plutarchi Theseus, Lycurgus. Olymp. 45 Solon. 74 Aristides. 75 Themistocles. 77 Cimon. 87 Pericles. 91 Nicias. 92 Alcibiades. 93 Lyfander. 95 Artaxerxes Mnemon. 96 Agesilaus. 102 Pelopidas. 103 Timoleon. 105 Dion. 107 Demosthenes. 111 Alexander. 115 Phocion. 116 Eumenes. 117 Demetrius. 125 Pyrrhus. 132 Aratus. 138 Agis et Cleomenes. 139 Philopæmen.

Corn. Nepos. Olymp. 72 Miltiades. 74 Aristides. 75 Themistocles. 76 Pausanias. 77 Cimon. 93 Lyfander. Alcibiades. 94 Thrasybulus. 96 Conon. 98 Datames. 105 Dion. 100 Iphicrates. 101 Chabrias, Timotheus. 102 Epaminondas. 103 Pelopidas. 110 Timoleon. 115 Eumenes. Phocion.

The Greek Chronology: Epochæ græcorum nobiliores, a Cecrope ad Dionis obitum. This famous monument is the principal of the Oxford marbles, published by Selden, opp. t. II. Prideaux, 1676; Maittaire, 1732. 1733; and Chandler, Oxford, 1763.

Edv.

Edv. Corfini *Fasti Attici*. Florent. 1744. 4. *Sciagraphia historię veteris Atheniensium*, ab æra Attica, A. 807 ante olympiades, ad olymp. CLXXIV, et Athenas a Sylla receptas. Meurs. fort. Attica, inter opp. omnia, Florent. 1736. Fabric. B. Ant. p. 291.

Greek Antiquities: Fabric. B. A. p. 78, Sam. Petitus, de legibus Atticis. edit. Wesseling.—Jo. Potteri Archiep. Cant. *Archæologia Græca*, tomo ultimo Thes. Antt. Græc. 1697—1702.

Jo. Bapt. Gramayé. *Asia, sive historia universalis rerum Asiaticarum*. Antv. 1608. 4.

Reineri Reineccii *syntagma de Familiis in monarchiis tribus prioribus*: f. 1573.

Ejusdem *historia Julia, seu syntagma heroicum trium priorum monarchiarum*, Helmstad. 1574. 1594. f.

Reineccius successfully revived the study of history, in the Julian University at Helmstad, founded in 1571 by Julius Duke of Brunswick, in honour of whom, he entitles this noble work, *Historia Julia*. See H. Rimius, memoirs of the house of Brunswick, 1750. 4. p. 265.

VIII.

THE ROMAN HISTORY. v. du Fresnoy, artic. 36—38:

‘The eternal wisdom gave all the central regions of the globe to the Roman People, in recompence for their civil and religious virtues; and directed their policy to his own ends, the cultivation of reason and civility, and the propagation of the system of redemption.’ Whitaker’s history of Manchester, ch. ii. §. 1. vid. ch. xii. §. 5.

A. U. C.

1—821.

Steph. Vinandi Pighii *annales Romanorum*, qui commentarii vicem supplent in omnes veteres historię Romanę scriptores. Antv. 1615. 3 f.

Diony-

- 1—312. Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The English translation by Mr. Spelman, 1758, is from the Greek text of the Oxford edit. 1704. The French version of Le Jay, 1722 is from the latin of Portus, as that of M. Bellanger, 1723 is from Sylburgius.
- 1—587. Livy, with Freinshemius's supplement of the IId decade. The Fr. transl. of M. Guerin, is commended by M. Rollin. H. R. iv. pref.
- 365—609. Polybius, edit. 1609. 1670. 1763. tr. by Mr. Hampton. and by Thuillier. Compare Polyb. b. iii. and b. x. with Livy. b. xxi. xxii. xxvi. pulchrum ingeniorum certamen.
- C. Silii Italici Punica. curante A. Drakenborch. 1717. 4. every one who reads Livy and Polybius should study this correct and elegant poem.

The 95 lost books of Livy contained the R. H. of 157 years, to the Y. of R. 744. See the epitome.

Appian supplies a great part of this defect: of his entire work in xxiv books, written A. D. 140, remain the argument of the first book, in Photius, cod. 56.—an epitome of the ivth book, or Celtica.—L. vi. vii. viii, Iberica, Hanniballica, Lybica—L. xi, Syriaca et Parthica—L. xiii—xvii, de bellis civilib. ab A. U. 620—L. xxiii, Illyrica. edit. gr. Hoeftchellii, 1599. 4. v. Fabric. B. G. lib. iv. c. 12.

- 640—706. Sallust. Jugurtha, Catiline, fragments, letters.
- 695—709. Cæsar. Hirtius. Oppius. Lucan.
- 684—710. Cicero's letters. Of his *anecdota*, see ad Attic. ii. 6.

On the spirit of conquest and the injustice of the Roman wars; J. F. Buddens, jurisprudentiæ historicæ specimen ex hist. Romana: in his *selecta juris naturæ et gentium*: Halæ. 1704. 8.

The IMPERIAL HISTORY.

A. U.

- 1—684. Cassii Dionis librorum i—xxxv fragmenta.
 685—807. Ejusdem libri xxxvi—lx, fere integri.
 807—975. Ejusdem libri lxi—lxxx, ex epitome Jo. Xiphilini edit. Fabricii et Reimari, 1752.

‘Integrum Dionem reperisse sibi visus est Nicolaus Carminius Falco, qui edidit gr. et lat. Neapoli 1747 f. libros i—xxi. sed nihil per totum hoc volumen vides, præter lacinias longiores ex Dionysio, Plutarcho, Zonara, &c. Dionis nomine audacter inscriptas.’ Reimarus ad Dionis fragm. i.

- 932—991. Herodian. Edinb. 1724. 8. gallice, Mongaulti, 1700. 12.
 7—1162. Zosimus. Oxon. 1679. 8. Jenæ, 1713. 8.
 766—845. Tacitus. edit. Ernesti, 1752. 8.
 669—848. Suetonius. 1714. 4. par M. de la Pause. 1771. 4 voll. 8.
 868—1036. Historia Augusta 1620. f. 1671. 8.
 1105—1130. Ammianus Marcellinus. 1693. 1773.
 1057—1280. Anonymi excerpta, post Ammianum edita.
 1131—1200. Prosperi chronicon. ap. Canis. Ant. Lect. i. 313.

I omit the abridgements of the Roman history, by Florus, Victor, Rufus, &c.—Velleius, adulandi artifex maximus, as Seneca styles him, N. Q. 2. iv. præf.—Valerius Maximus supplies many historic anecdotes. Eutropius must be mentioned here, because his continuator Paullus Diaconus introduces us to the history of the middle ages. Here we tread on barbarous ground; and the following pages, which have cost me some researches, will furnish no entertainment, except to such as seek for historic information at the fountain head.

IX.

HISTORY of the MIDDLE AGES.

For the literary history of these writers, consult especially J. A. Fabricii bibliotheca latina mediæ et infimæ ætatis, vi tomis, Patavii, 1754. 5. who shews the necessity of consulting such memoirs 'et quantos ex illis detur fructus colligere ad omnem mccc amplius annorum memoriam, de rebus usque quaque per grande illud spatium in republica, in ecclesia, in litterario orbe gestis.'

COLLECTIONS: Fresnoy, vol. iii. artic. 43.

Schardius, 1673, 4 f.—Pistorius, 1613, 3 f.—Reuberus, 1619, f.—Urstifius, 1670, f.—Goldastus, 1661, f.—Freherus, 1717. 3 f.—Lindenbrogius, 1706. f.—Ejusdem Codex Legg. Antt. 1613. 2. f.—Meibomius, 1688. 3 f.—Paulinus, 1698. 4.—Leibnitz, accessiones historicæ, 1700. 4. Ejusd. scriptores rerum Brunvicensium, 1707. 3 f.—Kulpifius, 1685. f.—Schilterus, 1702 f.—Heineccius et Leuckfeldus, 1702. 1707. f.—Ludewig, 1718. f.—Ejudem reliquiae MSS. 1720.—Ecard, 1723. 2 f.—Canisius, 1725. 7 f.—Pezius, 1720. 6 f.

Thesaurus Antiqq. Italiæ, Grævii, 1714—1720. 45 f.

Ferd. Ughellus, Italia sacra. 1642. 1720. 10 f.

Lud. Ant. Muratorii antiquitates Italicæ mediæ ævi, sive dissertationes de moribus Italici populi, ab inclinatione Romani imperii usque ad annum 1500. Mediolani, 1738. vi tomis.

Lud. Ant. Muratorii rerum Italicarum scriptores ab A. 500, usque ad A. 1500; Mediolani, 1723, &c. xxx tomis. quorum indicem dedit Fresnoy, v. 84—92.

This magnificent collection furnishes the sources of the history of the middle ages: which is methodized by Freherus, in a directory, prefixed to his collection of scriptores rerum Germanicarum 1771, and published at Nuremb. 1720. 4. with this title: Marqu. Freheri directorium in omnes fere chronologos annalium scriptores et historicos, potissimum Romani Germanique imperii recognovit et auxit J. D. Koelerus.

Cangii nomenclator scriptorum mediæ atque infimæ ætatis, prefixed to his latin glossary. v. Le Clerc. B. U. xii. 237.

A. D.

- A. D.
 283—565. Car. Sigonii historiarum de occidentali imperio libri xx. 1693. f.
 570—1286. Eiusdem hist. de regno Italiæ libri xx. 1613 f. et inter Sigonii opera, Mediolani edita.
 360—750. Paulus Warnefridi F. Diaconus.
 — 552. Jornandes de rebus Geticis.
 176—628. Isidori Hispalensis hist. Gothorum, edit. Lindenbrogii Hamb. 1611. H. Grotii Scriptores Rer. Gothic. 1655. 8.
 O. C.—600. Gregorius Turonensis, 1699. f.
 600—735. Eiusdem continuator.
 714—900. Annales Francorum Fuldenfes.
 741—842. Adelmi Benedictini annales Carolorum.
 U. C.—751. Antiquités Gauloises de Claude Fauchet, 1610. 4.
 755—1076. Adami Bremensis H. E. 1670. 4.
 768—814. Eginhardi vita Caroli M. 1711. 4. v. Koeleri diff. de bibliotheca Caroli M. Altorf, 1727. 4.
 778—840. Thegani vita Ludovici Pii.
 788—1504. Alberti Crantzii metropolis, libb. xii. de ecclesiis sub Carolo M. instauratis. edit. 1575. f. in qua, Wandalizæ libb. xiv. Saxonizæ libb. xiii. Danizæ libb. viii. Suedizæ libb. v. Norvegizæ libb. vi. De Crantzio, doctrina, probitate, et meritis inclyto, v. Fabric. in B. M. et I. Lat. i. 41.
 830—1370. Joannes Trithemius: opp. historica. 1601. f.
 1—907. Regino. 1609, f. cum
 O. C.—1228. Conrado, abbate Urspergenfi, et
 O. C.—1352. Lamberto Schafnab. qui a 1050 ad 1077, diligentius res persequitur.
 O. C.—1100. Hermannus Contractus, cum continuatoribus. Ratisb. 1726. f.
 1073—1082 Brunonis hist. belli Saxonici, ap. Freherum, t. i.
 O. C.

- O. C—1152. Otto Frisingensis. 1569. f. with a continuation to 1210.
- 1162—1237. Godefridi monachi annales diligentissimi : ap. Freher. t. i. p. 335—404.
- 381—1112. Sigebertus Gemblacensis. ap. Pistorium. t. i.
- 1113—1210. Robertus de monte, contin. Sigeberti.
- O. C—1250. Vincentii Bellovacensis Speculum. 1624. f.
- 1270—1378. Alberti argentinensis annales accurati : ap. Urstis. t. ii.
- U. C—1278. Martinus Polonus. de quo, Niceron. xiv. 195. Eccard. proleg. ad hist. med. ævi, §. xx. aliiq., ap. Fabric. B. M. L. v. 42. 'Nihil celebrius ejus chronico summorum pontificum atque imp. Romanorum, per annos 50.' in Eccardi t. i. cum
- 1163—1343. Continuatione et additamentis. v. Cave. H. ii. 323.
- 1295—1362. Henricus de Rebdorf. apud Freher. t. i.
- 1326—1400. Croniques et histoires de Jean Froissard.
- 1—1472. Platina de vitis pontificum.
- 1494. Joh. Cuspinianus, quem excipit.
- 1494—1540. Paulus Jovius. Basil. 1578. f.
- 1464—1500. Memoires de Philippe de Comines, edit de M. Godefroy, Brusselle, 1723.

Of these and other writers of the barbarous ages, consult Buddeus, isag. ad theolog. p. 170. 832. Cave. H. L. 1740. D. Whear, relectiones hyemales, cum accessionibus. J. C. Neuw 1704. 3. voll. 12. Morhof. polyhist. tom. iii. Lib. iv.

X.

HISTORIC POEMS of the MIDDLE AGES.

Claudian, Rutilius, Sidonius, sing the dirge of the western empire; and record that great revolution more circumstantially than any of the latin historians.

The xiith and xiiith centuries were distinguished by some considerable latin poems, of which Mr. Warton has given the best account, in his dissertation on the introduction of learning into England, prefixed to his excellent history of english poetry, 1774. 4. What follows is collected from that learned work, with some additions from Fabricius, &c.

Fl. 1190. John Hanvil, a monk of St. Albans. His Archithrenius, in ix books, Paris, 1517. 4, is a mixture of satire and panegyric on public vice and virtue, with some historical digressions. v. Leyserus, in hist. poeseos medii ævi, apud Fabric. B. M. L. iv. 82.

1198. Sylvester Gyraldus Cambrensis. See Warton. Angl. Sacr. ii. 374. his capital piece of latin poetry is in praise of divine wisdom, in vii. books.

1210. A miracle of this age in classical composition was Joseph of Exeter, commonly called Josephus Iscanus. His poem on the Trojan war, addressed to King Henry II is published by Mad. Dacier, with Dares Phrygius, 1702: 4. v. Leyser. p. 772.

His Antiocheis, on the crusade of Richard I. a fragment of which is given by Mr. Warton, from Camden's remains: p. 410. he alludes to this work in these spirited lines addressed to Henry II.

—Tuque, oro, tuo da, maxime, vati
Ire iter inceptum, Trojamque aperire jacentem.
Te sacræ assument acies divinaque bella,
Tunc dignum majore tuba: tunc pectore toto
Nitar, et immensum mecum spargere per orbem.

1100. Gulielmus Apulienfis, de rebus Normanorum in Sicilia gestis, libri v. 1582. 4. et in Leibnitii Serr. Brunsvic. i. 578.

1200. Gulielmi Britonis Aremorici Philippidos libri xlii. 1657. 4. Barthius, Advers. xliii. 7. who gives a prodigious character of this poem; but Mr. Warton is of opinion that the Philippid is greatly exceeded by

1200. Philip Gualtier de Chatillon, who wrote the Alexandreid in x books, in which he versifies Quintus Curtius. Edit. 1513. 1541. 1558. 4. he was censured by a much inferior poet of the same age,

Alanus de insulis, author of Anti-Claudianus, ix libris. ed. 1536. 1582. v. Leyser. p. 1016, 19.

Angeli Bargæi Syriados libri xii. Paris, 1582. f. 1591. 1616. on the subject of the first crusade, afterwards immortalized by the genius of Tasso.

Of Petr. Ang. Bargæus, who died 1596, see Crenii Consilia, 1696, p. 472. Thuanus, p. 701. edit. Genev. 1630 f. says, poetica excelluit, et Cynegetica ejus ac Syrias merito commendantur. Bargæi libellus, quo ordine historiæ romanæ scriptores sunt legendi: Apud Crenium, p. 474.

Memoire concernant la vie et les ouvrages de Guillaume le Breton. par M. de la Curne: Mem. de litt. de l'acad. des inscr. xii. 255. 'on y trouve une suite assez complete d'un regne second en grands evenemens: on reconnoit par tout dans la Philippide un poete du premier ordre.—Le commentaire, dont Barthius l'a enrichie, renferme une erudition immense.

1206. About this time, Gunther, a German monk, wrote an heroic poem in latin verse which (says Mr. Warton) is scarce inferior to the Phillippid of Guillaume le Breton, or the Alexandreid of Gualtier, but not so polished and classical as the Trojan war of our Josephus Iscanus. It is in x books: the subject is the war of the emperor Frederick Barbarossa, against the Milanese in Liguria,

Guntheri

Guntheri Ligurinus, de rebus gestis imp. Friderici; edidit Cour. Peutingerus, 1507. f. et, cum Richardi Bartholini (qui fl. a. 1515.) Austriados libris xii, Jac. Spigelius, 1531. f. Guntherus, Othoni Frisingensi junctus, cum præfatione Ph. Melancthonis, 1569. f. & separatim, cum præclaris notis Rittershusii, 1598. 8. Fabric. B. M. L. iii. 175.

Solymarium, sive poema de bello sacro et captis a Godofredo Bullioneo a. 1099, Hierosolymis memorat in Ligurino, i. 13. x. 648. Fabric. ibid 174. Withofii specimen Guntherianum, ap. Vonck. Lect. lat. ii. 4.

A poet of the vith century should have been mentioned before. Fl. Cresconius Corippus: ejus de laudibus Justinii minoris, ab anno 565 imp. libri iv. prodire, addito Petri Apollonii Collatii carmine de excidio Hierosolymitano, cum notis Mich. Ruizii, 1581. 8. Th. Dempsteri, 1610. 8. & C. Rittershusii, 1664. 4. anno demum 1743. Corippus Altorfii editus est, negligentissimè, judice C. V. Vonckio, qui in hoc poeta plurima emendavit. Lect. lat. et specimine critico, 1745. 8.

1210. Gualteri Mapes carmina rhithmica vulgata sunt a Flacio, in poematibus de corrupto Ecclesiæ statu, Basil, 1546. 8. et a Polycarpo Leysero, 1720. 4.

Leyserus took much pains to vindicate the poets of the middle ages from the just imputation of barbarism, in his dissert. de ficta medii ævi barbarie, Helmst. 1719. 4. and in his Historia poetarum et poematum medii ævi, Halæ, 1721. 8. vid. Fabric. B. L. lib. iii. who mentions many other poems of those ages: as, Ennodius, edit. Sirmondi, 1611. 8. Orientius, 1651. 8. 1706. 4. v. Fabric. B. M. L. v. 174. Aldhelmus, a I. F. Gronovio emendatus, Obs. eccles. capp. 15. 20.

Theodulphus, a Sirmondo editus, 1645. 8. v. Fabric. vi. 231. Arnulphus Lexoviensis, ab And. Rivino, 1655. 8. v. Daumii syllabum poetarum christianorum, Paulini Petrocorii editioni, 1681. 8. præmissum.

These writers are useful in history, however abhorrent from the pure taste of classical antiquity: yet a good taste consists not in the *ignorance*, but in the *discernment* of bad modes of composition.

XI.

THE BYZANTINE HISTORY.

Fabric. B. G. tom. vi.—Du Fresnoy. artic. xxxix.
M. Hanckius de Byzant. scriptoribus. 1677. 4.—Historiæ Byzantinæ edit. Paris 1645—1702. Edit. Veneta, quam sequor, xxiii tomis. 1729.

Excerpta de Legationibus, ex Dexippo, Eunapio, Petro, Prisco, Malcho, et Menandro. edit. Vales. 1634. 4. Eclogæ ex Olympiodoro, Candido, Theophane, Hesychio, Suida.

395—554. Procopii Cæs. Persica, Vandalica, Gothica, de Ædificiis; Anecdota, quæ alteri Procopio adscribuntur, in Memm. de l'Acad. des Insér. t. xxi. 4.

554—559. Agathias, de imperio Justiniani. libb. v.

582—602. Theophylacti Simocattæ libb. viii. de imperio Mauricii

602—770. Nicephori patr. C P. breviarium.

O. C. 284. Georgii Syncelli chronographia.

285—813. Theophanis continuatio chronographiæ Syncelli.

813—950. Scriptores post Theophanem. Leo grammaticus.

950—1050. Cedrenus, Zonaras, et reliqui annalium scriptores.

1057—1081. Nicephorus Bryennius Cæsar, libb. iv.

1069—1118. Anna Comnena Cæsarissa, Alexiados libb. xv.

1118—1176. Joh. Cinnami hist. libri vi.

1118—1206. Nicetas Choniates; hist. byz. libri xxi.

1204—1261. Georgii Acropolitæ historia et compendium.

1258—1308. Georgii Pachymeræ hist. libri xiii.

1204—1359. Nicephori Gregoræ libri xxxviii. ex quibus libros xxiv edidit Jo. Boivin. 1711. libri xxv—xxxviii adhuc MSS servantur.

1320—1357. Joannes Cantacuzenus, ex-imperator, de rebus sui temporis libb. iv.

1300—1463. Lonicus Chalcochondylas, de rebus Turcicis, libri x. In the 2d book, he gives the state of Germany and of England in 1347: in the 8th book, the siege of C P. in the 9th and

10th, the Turkish conquests, of Corinth, Athens, Sparta, Lesbos, Argos. gallicé, 1705. 2 f.

1260—1478. Georgius Phranzes, libri iii. latiné editi tomo xxiii edit. Venetæ.

1341—1462. Ducas. capp. xlv. 1422 Jo. Cananus.

1225—1270. Hist. de S. Louis, par Jean Sire de Joinville, edit. du Cange, Paris 1668. Jean Sire de Joinville & Guillaume de Nangis, annales de S. Louis. Paris 1761.

1198—1207. Geoffroy de Ville-hardouin, hist. du conquête de CP. par les Francois.

1198—1453. Du Cange, hist. de CP. sous les Empp. Francois.

1300—1711. The Othman history, by Demetrius Cantemir, Prince of Moldavia. Lond. 1734. fol.

Car. du Fresne du Cange Historia Byzantina duplici commentario illustrata. 1. Familiæ Cpolitanzæ, cum numismatibus. 2. descriptio urbis C P. Paris 1680.

Caroli du Fresne du Cange Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediæ et Infimæ Græcitatis. 1688. 2 f. v. Le Clerc. B. U. xiv. 32.

Ejusd. Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediæ et Infimæ Latinitatis, 1678, 3 f. — edit. Benedictinorum, 1733, 6 f. — Carpentarii supplementum, 1766.

Georgius Codinus de Officiis magnæ ecclesiæ et aulæ CP. — notitia Græcorum Episcopatum. — Notitia Dignitatum omnium Imperii Romani, in partibus Orientis et Occidentis. v. Tillemont. hist. des Empp. vi. 266. — Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, de Ceremoniis aulæ CP. gr. et lat. edidit Reiskins. Lips. 1751. v. Fabric, B. G. vi. 486. 622.

Const. porph. excerpta historico-politica et moralia, substitutis 53. quorum 27 mum de legationibus, et 50 mum de virtutibus et vitiis, ediderunt F. Ursinus, 1582. 4. D. Hoeschelius, 1603. 4. et Henr. Valesius, 1634. 4.

Anselmi Bandurii Imperium Orientale. Paris 1711. 2 f

Hist. de l'Eglise, 6 v. — Hist. de CP. 8 v. — Xiphilin, Zonare, Zosime, 2 v. — Hist. de l'empire d'Occident. 2 v. — 1683—6. par M. Confin.

The

The Greek language, as Pelloutier conjectures, i. 140, is a mixture of the Scythian, the Phoenician, and the Egyptian. M. Fourmont reduced all the greek words to 300 radicals, of Thracian or Phoenician origin. Homer gave the greek poetry its colour and consistency, and enriched as well as harmonized the language. It seems, from the coincidence of epithets and cadence in Homer and Hesiod, that the greek heroic verse was formed spontaneously by the old *Aoidoi*, a sort of improvisatori, and that Homer and his first followers adopted their versification. The Iliad and Odyssée have much of the air of extempore composition: an epithet is never wanting to fill up a verse; and a set of expressions are mechanically annexed to such ideas, as were of frequent recurrence. Hence that copiousness and waste of words in the old greek bard, which forms such a contrast to the condensed and laboured composition of Virgil.

The greek prose was of a more difficult structure: and it may be distributed into several styles, or degrees of purity. Of the prose-authors now extant, the first and best style is that of Herodotus and of Plato in the florid or mixed kind, of Xenophon in the pure and simple, of Thucydides and Demosthenes in the austere. Nothing perhaps is so conducive to form a good taste in composition, as the study of these writers.

The style of Polybius forms a new epoch in the history of the greek language: it was the idiotic or popular manner of expression, especially among military men, in his time, about the 150th Olympiad. It became the model of succeeding writers, by introducing a simple unstudied expression, and by emancipating them from the anxious labour of the old greeks, respecting the cadence and choice of words. The style of the New Testament, being plain and popular, frequently resembles that of Polybius: as has been shewn by Raphelius, and by Kirchmaier, *de parallelismo N. T. et Polybii*. 1725.

Before this historian, the Alexandrian Jews had formed a new or hellenistic style, resulting from the expression of oriental ideas and idioms in greek words, after that language

had lost of its purity, as it gained in general use, by the conquests of Alexander. The hellenistic is the language of the septuagint, the apocrypha, the new testament, and partly of Philo and Josephus. This mixture in the style of the evangelists and apostles is one credential of the authenticity of the best of all books, a book which could not have been written but by Jewish authors in the first century. See the fine remarks of Bp. Warburton, doctr. of grace, book I. ch. 8—10. Critics lose their labour, in attempting to adjust the scripture-greek to the standard of atticism.

The diction of the greek historians and geographers of the Augustan age is formed on that of Polybius, but improved and modernized; like the English of the present age, if compared with that of Clarendon or Bacon. More perspicuous than refined, it was well suited to such compilations as were then written by men of letters, such as Dionysius, Diodorus, and Strabo, without much experience or rank in public life.

The ecclesiastical style was cultivated in the christian schools of Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople: rank and luxuriant, full of oriental idioms, and formed in great measure on the septuagint version. Such is, for instance, the style of Eusebius. After him, the best christian writers polished their composition in the schools of rhetoric, under the later sophists. Hence the popular and flowing purity of St. Chrysostome, who (says the learned prelate so often cited, pref. to Julian. p. xii.) 'has more good sense than Plato,' and perhaps, as many good words.

On the greek of the Byzantine empire, there is a good dissertation by Ducange, de causis corruptæ græcitatæ, prefixed to his glossary, together with Portius's grammar of the modern greek. This last stage of the greek language is a miserable picture of Turkish barbarism. 'Il n'y a point de ville grecque, où le langage soit plus éloigné de l'ancien, qu'à Athenes. La raison de cela est, qu'elle a été habitée pendant long-tems par diverses nations.' Le Clerc. B. U. xiv. 43. One of the most curious books which is extant in the modern greek, is the poem of Θεσεος και Ευηλια, Venice, 1529. translated, in Iambic stanzas, from Le Teseide of Boccace in

xii books, Venice, 1528. 4. See Mr. Warton's hist. of English poetry, i. 126. and Mr. Tyrwhitt's introd. to Chaucer. p. 132.

These observations on the Greek language are offered, in order to excite attention to this subject of criticism. Many things might be added, by such as can consult the histories of the Greek tongue, written by Burton, 1657. 8. Elingius, 1691. 8. Reinhard. 1724. 8. Loescher's Jon. 1702. 8. and Langius, de differentia linguæ Græcorum veteris ac novæ, Altorf. 1707. 4.

XII.

THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITIAN.

- Bp. Nicholson's English Historical library, 1714. f. 1776. 4.
 Collections. Fabric. B. M. Lat. i. 102.
1. Abp. Parker. 1570. 1574. Watts. 1571. Howard. 1592. 4.
 2. Galfridus Monamuth.—Gildas—Beda. &c. Heidelb. 1587.
 3. H. Savil. scriptores post Bedam. 1596. 1601.
 4. G. Camdeni scriptores H. A. 1602.
 5. A. du Chesne scriptores rer. Normannic. 1619.
 6. R. Twissdeni scriptores x. 1652.
 7. J. Fell et T. Gale, tomus i. 1684. tomus ii. 1687.
 8. T. Gale, Hist. Brit. scriptores xv. 1691.
 9. Bp. Kennet's Engl. collection. 1706. 3 f.
 10. H. Wharton. Anglia sacra. 1691. 2 f.
 11. W. Dugdale, monasticon Angl. 1655. 1661. 1722. 4. f.
 12. T. Hearne. See his life, 1775. 8.
 13. A. Hall. 1709. 1719. 1722, 8. Leland, Trivet, &c.
 14. T. Rymer. fœdera, ab. a. 1101, ad a. 1516. xvi. to-
 mis, 1715. xvii. tomis, 1719. xx. tomis, 1737.
 15. Leges veteres Anglorum. Nicholson, p. 45. fol.
 16. Concilia M. B. a. 446—1717. Spelman, 1659. Wil-
 kins, 1737. 4 f.

Aristot. de mundo. c. 3.—Polybuis, l. ix.—Cicero, ad Att. l. iv. ad Fam. l. vii.—Cæsar, lib. iv. v. vi.—Tacitus, Annal xii. xiv. Vita Agricolaë, Germania, where we find the origin of our constitution. Ce beau système, says Montequieu, liv. iv. c. ii. a été trouvé dans le bois.—Strabo's account of Britain, l. iv. reads like a modern description.—Suetonius, in Claudio, c. 17.—Dio. lib. xxxix. xl. lx. lxii. See Bp. Nicholson, p. 39, Camden's Britannia.—Selden's Analec̃ta.

A. D.

- 1—1154. The Saxon Chronicle, edit. of Bp. Gibson, Oxon. 1692. 4. the foundation of all our histories to the Norman conquest. Bp. Nicholson, p. 46.
- 1066—1083. Ingulphus, Marianus Scotus. *ibid.* p. 56.
- 1101—1119. Florence of Worcester: with a continuation to 1170.
- 1066—1122. Eadmerus, edit. Seldeni. 1623. of unquestionable authority.
- 1150. Geoffrey of Monmouth. *historia Britannorum ab Ænea et Bruto ad a. 689.* translated by Mr. Thompson, Bp. N. p. 36.
- 449—1143. William of Malmesbury, Francf. 1601. f.
- 1153. Henry of Huntingdon.
- 1197. William of Newbury.
- 1202. Roger de Hoveden.
- 1067—1273. Matthew Paris. edit. 1640.
- 1307. Matthew of Westminster.
- 1422. Tho. Walsingham, *historia brevis, et hypodigma Neustriæ [Normandy.]* 1574. f.
- 1485. Robert Fabian. 1559. f.
- 1413—1483. Polydore Virgil. libb. xxvi. Basil, 1534.
- Of Rastal, Hall, Grafton, Holinshead, Stow, Daniel, Speed, Baker. see Bp. Nicholson, p. 71. who commends Dr. Hoel's medulla, 1679. 8. and an anonymous historian, 1701. 8, as having kept his one design always in

in view, to shew the excellency of our English constitution. p. 75.

Dr. Robert Brady's complete history of England, 1685, wherein he endeavours to prove, that all our adored liberties are derived from the crown, and owing to the concessions of our princes. p. 74.

James Tyrrel, Esq; in his general hist. 1700. 2 f. seems to be as hearty an advocate for property, as Dr. Brady is for prerogative.

From the statute of Marlbridge, ann. 1267, 52 Hen. III. some have taken the great epoch of our present English government; affirming that it was then that, to use Livy's expression, the *imperia legum* began to prevail in our land, the confusions of absolute and arbitrary tyranny being utterly abolished and laid aside. p. 189.

1483—1485. Sir Thomas More's hist. of Richard III.

1485—1509. Lord Bacon's history of Henry VII.

1509—1558. Bp. Godwin's annals of Henry VIII. Edw. VI and Q. Mary.

1558—1603. Mr. Camden's exquisite hist. of Q. Elizabeth should be read in its author's polite Latin, Bp. Nicholson. p. 87.

1603—1667. Lord Clarendon's state papers. Oxf 1773.

1509—1713. Bishop Burnet. see bishop Nicholson, p. 119, who gives a large account of the church history of Britain, in his second part. Jac. Usserii Brit. Eccles. antiquitates, 1687. Bp. Stillingfleet. Origines Britannicæ. 1685.

A.D. 1—766. Of Bede's ecclesiastical hist. see p. 99.

—1121. Ordericus Vitalis. H. E. libb. xiii. 1619.

W. Lynwood's provinciale. 1679.

Dr. Innett. origines Anglicanæ. 1710. herein we see by what steps the papal usurpation advanced its universal empire. p. 103.

Of Harpsfield, Parsons, Smith, Alford, Cressy, Sanders, &c. popish historians, p. 110. 114. Fuller. 1655. his Church-history, and 'Worthies.'

Collier, 1708. 1714. respectful to the See of Rome, he represents the reformers as seditious; while Heylin, 1661, paints them as fanatics. Both extremes were avoided by Bp. Burnet, and by Mr. Strype. p. 121.

The most ample collections of records and state-papers, are those of Rushworth, Thurloe, Clarendon, the Sydney-papers, parliamentary debates and journals.

XIII.

HISTORY OF FRANCE AND OTHER EUROPEAN STATES.

The affairs of the several kingdoms of Europe are so blended with each other, that the history of so considerable a monarchy as that of France includes a great part of the general history of Europe, which for several centuries is inseparable from that of the two great houses, of Bourbon and Austria.

Jaques le Long, bibliotheque hist. de la France. 1719. f.

254—1286. Andr. du Chesne, hist. Francorum scriptores coetanei. 1636. 5 f.

838—1220. Ejusd. hist. Normannorum scriptores antiqui. M. Bouquet, recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France. 1738. This magnificent collection will consist of xxx volumes, of which about one half are already published, in a manner worthy of imitation in collecting the original historians of Great Britain.

Hist. des Cettes, par S. Pelloutier. viii tomes. 12. Paris 1770.

The poems of Ossian, 'noble and genuine remains of the celtic poetry.' Mr. Warton, diff. i.

- 481—1715. Henault, abregé chronologique. 1752. 1756. 4.
 25—1598. Mezerai. 1685. 3 f.--abrege, 1673. vii voll. 12.
 254—1610. P. Daniel. 1755. 17 voll. 4to.
 Le Gendre. commended, as a most excellent
 historian, by lord Chesterfield: lett. 12.
 The most useful part of whose elegant let-
 ters relates to modern history. My defe-
 rence for every real excellence leads me to
 adopt several of his lordship's ideas on this
 subject.
- 1326—1400. Froissart. 4 f. 1559.
 1401—1498. Anonymous continuation of Froissart.
 1400—1467. Monstrelet. 3 f. 1572.
 1464—1498. Commines. 1747. iv voll. 4to.
 1543—1620. Thuanus. 1610. 1733. vii f. gallice. 1734.
 1550—1610. D'Aubigné. 1616. f. see his life, p. 417.
 1559—1598. Davila. Lond. 1755.
 1570—1610. Duc de Sully. 1725. xii vol. in 12mo. moder-
 nized by Lecluse, 1745 iii vol. 4to.
 1610—1643. Le Vassor. hist. de Louis XIII. 1701. x voll.
 1643—1715. Voltaire, Louis XIV. 'dans quatre guerres de
 Louis XIV. plus de deux millions d'hommes
 sont massacrés, et autant sont morts misérables.
 hist. gen. ch. cxcvi.' Yet this reign of blood,
 this siècle de Louis XIV. is the subject of
 a splendid and unphilosophical panegyric.

NATIONAL HISTORIANS.

OF ITALY.

- 1215—1494. Machiavelli, istoria Fiorentina.
 1494—1530. Francesco Guicciardini, istoria d'Italia, libri
 xx. in Venezia, 1738. 2 voll. fol. et Fri-
 burgi, 4 voll. 4to. 1775, from the origi-
 nal MS. in the Medicean library.

Monthly Rev. LV. 471.

Pietro Giannone, historia civile del regno di
 Napoli. 1723. French transl. 1742.

Span.

- Spain. Mariana, ed. 1733. Ferreras, 1741. v. Fres-
noy. art. 132.
- Portugal. Revolutions, par Vertot. Hist. Gen. par M.
de la Clede. 1735.
- Sweden. Prætorius—Snorro—Olaus M.—Rudbeckius
—Verelius—Torfæus—1711. 1715. 5 f.
S. Pufendorf. hist. rerum gestarum a Carolo
Gustavo Adolpho, Suecorum rege. 1696.
1729. 2 voll. f.
- Denmark. Saxo Grammaticus. 1640. Mallet. 1763.
- Poland. M. de Solignac. Amst. 1751. 5 voll. 12.
- Russia. Itin. Muscoviæ. 1700 f.—Rouffet, 1725.—
Rerum Muscoviticarum auctores varii. fol.
Francf. 1600.
- Low Countries. Strada. Grotius. Bentivoglio. le Clerc. Basnage.
- Germany. Jos. Barre, 1748. xi voll. 4.
- H. of Austria. Marquardi Hergott, genealogia diplomatica au-
gustæ gentis Hapsburgicæ. Viennæ, 1737.
3 fol.
Ejusd. monumenta domus Austriacæ. 1750. 3 fol.
Eccard. origg. Austriacæ. 1721. f.
Krafft. maison d'Autriche, 1745. 3 f.
- H. of Brunswick. Origines Guelficæ, Scheidii. Hanover, 1751.
4 voll. f. see the preface to H. Rimius,
memoirs of the House of Brunswick.
- H. of Bourbon. Sur la genealogie de la maison de Bourbon,
v. la chronologie novenaire de Cayet, i.
237, et nos autres historiens. Lecluse, sur
Sully, i. 16.

XIV.

GENERAL HISTORY OF EUROPE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

S. Pufendorf, introduction a l'histoire generale et politique de l'univers, continuée jusqu'en 1743, par B. de la Martiniere, augmentée par M. de Grace, Paris, 1753, viii voll. 4to; the best edition of this useful introduction to the modern history.

Jac. Perizonius, de rebus in Europa gestis, ab ineunte seculo xvi. ad Caroli V. mortem. Lugd. Bat, 1710. 8.

Hist. du seizieme siecle, par Durand, La Haye, 1734. 4 vol. 12.

1500—1560. Dr. Robertson's hist. of the reign of the emperor Charles V. Lond. 1769.

1560—1598. Dr. Watson's hist. of the reign of Philip II.

TREATIES and NEGOTIATIONS. Du Fresnoy, ch. 51. artic. 164.

Recueil des traitez depuis pres de trois siecles, par Fred. Leonard. 1692. vi. voll. 4to.

Recueil, &c. des le neuvieme siecle, par Moetjens, La Haye, 1700. 4 fol.

536—1700. Dumont, corps universel diplomatique: Amst. 1726. 16 voll. fol.

Nouveau traité diplomatique, vi tomes, 4to. Paris. 1765.

XV.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

- 1601—1640. Vittorio Siri, *memorie recondite*. 8 voll. 4to.
 1635—1655. Medesimo, *Il Mercurio*. 15 voll. 4to.
 1594—1604. Lettres d'Arnauld, Card. d'Ossat. Amst. 1708. 5 voll. 12mo.
 1607—1610. Negotiations du president pierre Jeannin. Paris. 1656. fol.
 1605— Le Mercure Francois, 25 vol. 8vo. 'ouvrage necessaire pour la premiere mortie du 17eme siecle.' Fresnoy, v. 14.
 1618—1672. Brachelius—Thuldenus—Breuver: cum tractatibus historico-politicis actisque publicis. 6 voll. 8vo. Fresnoy. v. 15. *curieux*.
 1600—1716. Memoires pour servir a l'histoire universelle d'Europe, Paris, 1725. 4 voll. 12mo.
 1600—1716. Memoires pour servir a l'histoire de l'Eglise. Paris, 1725. 4 voll. Ld. C. lett. 128. commends this work as 'correct and exact.'
 1598—1678. Histoire des traitez de paix et autres negotiations du xvii siecle depuis la paix de Vervins jusqu'a la paix de Nimegue. Amst. 1725. 2 voll. fol.
 Histoire des guerres et des negotiations qui precederent le traité de Westphalie, par le P. Bougeant. 3 tom. 4to. Paris, 1727. 1767.
 Histoire du traité de Westphalie, per le P. Bougeant. Paris, 1744. 2 tom. 4to.

' There are histories of every considerable treaty, from that of Westphalia to that of Utrecht inclusively. P. Bougeant's of the treaty of Westphalia, is an excellent one. Those of Nimeguen, Utrecht, and Ryswich, are not so well written, but are however very useful. L'histoire des traitez de paix, should be often consulted on treaties concluded in the seventeenth century. Lord Chesterfield, vol. i. lett. 120.

1644—1648. Actes et negotiations de la Paix de Munster et d'Osnabrug. 1727, 4 vol. fol.

'The treaty of Munster is the proper period to begin with. The next period is the treaty of the Pyrenees, which laid the foundation of the succession of the house of Bourbon to the crown of Spain. Next come the treaties of Nimeguen and Ryswick, postscripts to those of Munster and the Pyrenees. The interval between the peace of Ryswick and the breaking out of the great war in 1702, though a short is a most interesting one.' Lord Chesterfield, vol. II. lett. 60. and vol. I. lett. 123—127. 'L'Abbé Mably's droit de l'Europe gives a clear deduction of the affairs of Europe from the treaty of Munster to this time'.

XVI.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

It is a memorable circumstance at the conclusion of the preceding age, which had been so agitated by civil and foreign wars, that the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, and that of Carlowitz in 1700, gave an universal peace to Europe and Asia. The first idea of the history of the present age may be formed on Cambell's present state of Europe, 5th edit. 1757. He observes, that Gazettes, Treaties, and the law of nations reduced to system by Grotius and Pufendorf, are the basis of the history of this age: Chap. 3 he treats of Russia, 4 Sweden, 5 Denmark. 6 Poland. 7 Prussia. 8 The house of Austria. 9 The Germanic body. 10 The house of Bourbon. 11 Spain and the partition treaties: 12 Portugal. 13 Italy. 14 The United Provinces. 15 Great Britain.

1700—1718. Memoires pour servir a l'histoire du xviii Siecle, contenant les negotiations, traités, et autres documens authentiques, liés par une narration historique: par M. de Lamberty. 14 vol. in 4°. 1724. 1735. Lamberty, Recueil des negotiations depuis environ quarante ans. 1727. x voll. 4to.

1713—1736. Recueil des actes, negotiations, traitez, &c. depuis la paix d'Utrecht. par Jean Roussel. 22 tomes 12°.

Les interets des puissances de l'Europe fondez sur les traitez depuis la paix d'Utrecht, par J. Roussel. 1733. 3 vol. 4°.

Histoire militaire du Prince Eugene de Savoye, par M. M. Dumont et Roussel. la Haye, 1729, 1747, 3 vol. fol.

1704—1761. La Clef du cabinet des princes de l'Europe, v. Fresnoy, iii. 64.

The literary history of this age includes that of universal erudition. The English royal society, the academies of France, Berlin, and Petersburg, and especially the invention and general reception of literary journals, have given a regular form to the annals of learning. See Camusat, *histoire des journaux*, 1734, 8. 'The true use of learning,' says a pious author, 'is to apply the peculiar turn of genius and capacity, which each man hath received from God, either to improve and adorn human life, or to plead the cause of religion, to defend its truths, to enforce and recommend its practice, and to persuade men to virtue and happiness.'

XVII.

ANALYSIS OF THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

Having distributed the Christian History into Four periods, agreeable to the apocalyptic prophecies; the following analysis is intended to shew the historic scheme of that mysterious book, as an introduction to the study of ecclesiastical history.

'From what causes the apocalypse is at present so generally recieved, by the Greek, the Roman, and the Protestant churches' (Mr. G. p. lxix. note 65) is a question satisfactorily answered by our great divines, the Bishops of Gloucester and of Lichfield. My learned and good friend Dr. S. Hallifax hath with abundant evidence vindicated its authority and ascertained its date to the end of the reign of Domitian. See the viith of his

his well-reasoned sermons on prophecy. The following analysis is agreeable to Mr. Lowman's clear and rational Interpretation.

The apocalypse must have been in many prophecies impenetrably obscure, before their completion. Yet that the ancients, especially S. Jerome, who lived when the destruction of the Western empire began to take place, had the true key to this book; appears from many citations in Bp. Chandler's vindication of the defence of christianity. b. 1. ch. 2. §. iii. p. 237.

It is a circumstance, which adds weight to the protestant interpretation of Antichrist, that Luther and Calvin, and others of the first reformers, did not adopt it, and some of them even rejected the book itself. So that our interpretation is not founded on prejudice, but on the very force and lustre of truth.

See Tillemont. H. E. i. 987. 1086.

The general scheme of the apocalypse is regulated by the mystical number seven. Thus, there are

Seven epistles, to the seven Asian churches,	Ch. ii. iii.
A book with seven seals,	vi.
The founding of seven trumpets,	viii. ix.
The appearance of seven visions,	x. xi.
The pouring of seven phials,	xv. xvi.
And the whole revelation includes seven periods of history.	
The first chapter is an introductory vision.	

The epistles to the seven churches of the Lydian or proconsular Asia, are literal and moral, not mystical or prophetic; though admirably instructive to the present churches, in similar circumstances. See Bp. Newton, p. 27—41.

The fourth and fifth chapters describe the magnificent scenery of the Prophecy, and transport the enraptured reader before the throne of God and of the lamb.

PERIOD I. THE SEVEN SEALS. A. D. 95—323.

A. D.

1—323. First seal represents a white horse the emblem of victory and triumph; and denotes the christian religion prevailing over paganism.

100—138. Second seal, a red horse, the emblem of slaughter, denotes the destruction of the Jews under Trajan and Adrian.

Xiph. Traj. & Hadr. Euseb. H. E. iv. 2.

138—193. Third seal, a black horse, the rider holding a balance; fit emblem of the famine under the Antonines. Tert. ad Scap. c. 3. Capitolinus in Ant. Plo, c. 8. philos. c. 8.

193—270. Fourth seal, a pale horse with death; signifying the mortality and pestilence in the reigns of Maximin and Valerian.

270—304. Fifth seal: the souls of the martyrs under the altar; expressive of Diocletian's persecution. Lact. de mortib. persec.

304—323. Sixth seal; earthquakes, the sun darkened; emblem of commotions and revolutions in the R. empire, from Maximian to Constantine.

Interval. The sealing 144,000 converts to christianity. Seventh seal; including the prophecies of the seven trumpets, relative to the state of the empire after it became christian.

PERIOD II. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS. A. D. 337—750.

A. D.

337— 379. First trumpet : hail and fire mixt with blood ; destructive wars, and the lowest depression of society, till the settlement under Theodosius.

379— 412. Second trumpet : a Volcano ; the invasion of Italy, and the taking of Rome by Alaric.

412— 493. Third trumpet : a burning star ; signifying the ravages in Italy, the end of the Roman empire, and the founding the kingdom of the Goths.

493— 568. Fourth trumpet : a third part of the sun, moon and stars darkened ; the wars in Italy between Justinian's generals, and the Goths. The exarchate of Ravenna, and the authority of Rome suppressed.

568— 675. Fifth trumpet : locusts issuing from the abyfs ; The Mohammedan religion and empire.

675— 750. Sixth trumpet : four angels loosed in the Euphrates ; the reunion of the divided Saracen power, their invasion of Europe, and their defeat by Charles Martel.

756—2016. Seventh trumpet : including the prophecies of the little book or codicil, ch. x. expressed in the seven phials ; preceded by seven visions.

The SEVEN VISIONS preparatory to the pouring out of the Phials, both being descriptive of PERIOD III.
Ch. xi.—xvi.

Ch. xi. 1, 2. First vision: the measuring of the temple; part of it given to the gentiles; expressive of the corruptions in the church.

3—18. Second vision: the two witnesses in sackcloth; or the succession of faithful witnesses of truth, against the corrupt state of religion, during 1260 years.

xii. 1—5. Third vision: the woman clothed with the sun; her flight into the desert, for 1260 years, denoting the persecution and preservation of the church during that period.

7—12. Fourth vision: the war in heaven; the total conquest of the antichristian power.

13—17. Fifth vision: the dragon persecutes the woman. Pagan and Papal cruelties.

xiii. 1—10. Sixth vision: the beast with seven heads and ten horns. The civil empire, after Charlemagne, divided into ten kingdoms. See Machiav. hist. of Flor. b. i.

11—18. Seventh vision. The beast with two horns; or, the false prophet. The Roman hierarchy, regular and secular.

All the seven visions synchronize, or relate to the same period of time, the duration of the papacy, commencing 666 years after this prophecy, and ending 1260 years after its establishment.

PERIOD III. THE SEVEN PHIALS. A. D. 756—2016.

A. D.

- 830—988. First phial, poured on the earth. Commotions in the empire, under the family of Charlemagne. Extinction of that family. The empire, and crown of France, transferred to other families. Mezeray, i. 319.
- 1040—1190. Second phial, poured on the sea: the Crusades, in which two millions lost their lives.
- 1200—1371. Third phial, turns the rivers and fountains into blood: denoting the civil wars between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, the papal and imperial factions, when the Popes were driven out of Italy into France.
- 1378—1530. Fourth phial, poured on the sun. The long wars in Italy, Germany, France, and Spain, occasioned by the great schism in the papacy. The Turks take CP. and put an end to the eastern empire.
- 1560—1650. Fifth phial, poured on the throne of the Beast. The protestant reformation, confirmed by the principal states of Europe.
- 1670—1850. Sixth phial, poured on the Euphrates, probably denotes some future invasion of the Pope's dominions from its eastern boundary.
- 1850—2016. Seventh phial, poured on the air, the seat of Satan's empire, describes the total abolition of the papacy: which is the subject of the portrait of an idolatrous persecuting church, seated at Rome, and described under the character of a Babylonish woman, riding on the beast or civil power.
- Ch. xvii.
- Ch. xviii. A sublime description of the fall of the mystic Babylon, alluding to the predictions of the ancient prophets, respecting Tyre, Egypt, Babylon, and other idolatrous kingdoms.

- Ch. xix. Chorus of the heavenly church, singing the praises of God for the triumphs of his Justice.
- ver. 10. The great DOCTRINE of the revelation, the prohibition of all idolatrous and creature WORSHIP GOD.
- ver. 11—21. A great effort of the antichristian powers, to recover their dominion; and the decisive victory of CHRIST.
- Ch. xx. PERIOD IV. An angel imprisons Satan in
ver. 1—6. the abyfs, during one thousand years; a period of great prosperity and universality, peace and purity, of the christian church on earth.
- ver. 7—10. PERIOD V. Satan loosed, at the expiration of the thousand years, makes a second great effort, to recover his dominion, to revive the spirit of persecution and the corruptions of the church: but is again totally and for ever defeated.
- ver. 11—15. PERIOD VI. The general resurrection. The last judgment. The eternal destruction of the wicked.
- Ch. xxi. PERIOD VII. The vision of new heavens and a new earth, the happiness of the
Ch. xxii. city of God, and the eternal sabbath of all who are faithful and constant in the religion of Jesus Christ.
- ver. 6—21. Conclusion. The canon of scripture fixed unalterably. The authority of this book asserted. The MORAL of this prophecy: 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' Rev. xxii. 12.

XVIII.

ECCLSIASTICAL HISTORY.

J. A. Fabricius. B. G. tomis xi. xii.

J. F. Buddeus. isag. ad theolog. lib. II. c. 6.

J. G. Walchii biblioth. theolog. tomus iii. Jenæ, 1772.

I follow the method of the latest of these authors, and, on account of the extent of the subject, I have aimed at extreme brevity, omitting every circumstance that could be retrenched from the large volume which is here abridged.

§. I. INTRODUCTORY TREATISES.

Mart. Schmeizelii præcognita H. E. Jenæ 1721. 4.

Casp. Sagittarii introductio in H. E. cum supplemento J. A. Schmidii. Jenæ. 1694. 1718. 4.

Sacred Chronology. Usserii Annales. 1722 fol. Des Vignoles. 1738. 4.

For the Septuagint Chronology: Isaac Vossius, in several works.—P. Pezron. 1687. 4.—Sir J. Marsham, 1696. 4.

For the Hebrew text: Wasmuth. 1692 f.—Bp. Clayton. 1747. 4.

Sacred Geography: Eusebius, de locis hebr. 1707. f.

—Sanfon. 1704 f. vid. Cleric. B. C. ii. 305. xiii. i.

—Bochart. 1692. f.—Reland. 1716. 4.—Robert. 1747. 4.

—Car. a S. Paulo. 1703 f.—Wells. 1712. 8.

§. II. The SACRED HISTORY of the OLD TESTAMENT.

Eusebii Chronicon. edit. Scaligeri. 1658. f.

Sulpicius Severus; edit. Schotani, 1662 f.—edit. Veron. 1744. 4.

Compendium Gothanum H. E. 1723. 8. cum supplemento, 1757. 8.

Jo. Fr. Buddei H. E. veteris testamenti. Halæ. 1729. 4.

Fl.

- Fl. Josephus. 1726. f. Hegesippus. 1559. 8.
 Josephus Gorionides, Lat. 1706. 4. Lat. & Heb. 1710. 4.
 J. Basnage. hist. des Juifs. 1716.
 Js. Jos. Berruyer, hist. du peuple de Dieu, 1758.
 De rep. Judaica: Sigonius, 1701. 4. — Cunæus, 1713. 8.
 Leydecker. 1710. f. — Lewis, 1725.
 Patriarchal history. Heidegger. 1729. 4.
 Prophetic hist. Witfius. Misc. Sacr. tom. i. — Theologia
 prophetica, Gulichii, 1684. — Hulsii, 1683 — Gurtleri,
 1702. — Vitringæ, 1708. — Mali, 1710.
 History of idolatry. J. G. Vossius, opp. tomo v. — Selden, de
 diis Syris. 1672. v. Cleric B. C. vii. 80. — Vandale, 1696. 4.
 Jo. Marckii historia paradisi libris iv. 1705. 4.
 Jewish antiquities. Goodwin. 1748. 4. — Reland. 1713. 8.
 Spencer. 1727. f.

§ III. ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Prochorus, — Abdias, — Linus, — Clementinæ recognitiones,
 and other ancient, but spurious, writers.

Fragments of the genuine Hegesippus, Philippus Sidetes,
 Basilus Cilix, &c.

A. D.

- 1 — 337. Eusebius Cæs. continued by Rufinus, to 395.
 325 — 440. Socrates. Sozomenus. Theodoret. Philostorgius.
 431 — 594. Evagrius. Theodorus Lector.
 Editt. Valesii. 1659. 1677. 1695. 1720.
 Edit. ultima 1748, Augustæ Taurinorum,
 variis eruditorum observationibus locupletata.
 1 — 610. Nicephorus Callistus. Latiné, Paris. 1566. 8.
 Gr. Lat. Paris. 1630.
 — 592. Gregorius Turonensis: edit. Ruinarti, 1699.
 — 731. Bedæ H. E. gentis Anglorum, 1722. fol.
 1 — 400. Haymo, epitome Eusebii ac Rufini. 1671. 4.
 1 — 872.

- 1—872. Anastasii Bibliothecarii H. E. Paris, 1649.
 1—1140. Ordericus Vitalis. Paris, 1619.
 780—1504. Albertus Kranzius. Metropolis, 1627.

Lutheran writers of E. H.

- 1—1300 Centuriæ Magdeburgenses: 1559. 1624. xiii.
 vol. fol. Nuremb. 1757. 4.
 1—1600. Epitomized and continued by Ofiander, 4 voll.
 4to. 1604.
 1—1700. Pappus. 1677. 8.—Kromayerus, 1673. 4.—
 Weissman. 1719. 4.—Pfaffius, 1741. 8.
 —Mosheim. 1755. 1764. 4. Kranzius,
 1736. 4.—Schurzfleischius. 1744. 4.

Reformed or Calvinists: Hottinger, 16 centt. 1655. 4.—
 Le Sueur. 10 centt. 1730. continued by Pictet, 1732. 4

Jablonski, 16 centuries 1754. 8.

Popish historians: Cæsar Baronius, 12 centuries, Rome,
 1588. Lucca, 1740, with the Critica of Pagi, and the con-
 tinuation of Raynaldus to 1534, 34 voll. fol.

Isaaci Casauboni exercitationes in Baronium. 1663. 4.
 continued from A. D. 34 to A. 44. by S. Basnage, 1717. 4.
 whose annales politico-ecclesiastici, 1706. 3 vol. fol. include
 645 years, from Augustus to Phocas.

Natalis Alexandri H. E. 26 tomis, 8. 1676. 9 tom. fol.
 1734.

Cl. Fleury. H. E. to 1414, Paris 1720. 4. continued by
 le Fevre, 1740. 40 vol. 4to. and 12mo.—Choisy, 1723. 4.

Ambr. Gardeboscii H. E. sæculum primum. Tolosæ 1713. f.

Ign. Graveson, a. C. N. ad A. 1721. Aug. Vindel. 1727. f.

Jos. Aug. Orsi. Italicé, cinque sæcula, xvi. tomis, Ro-
 mæ, 1747.

Arians. Sandius. 1676. 4. Franckii chronica, 1536. f.
 vid. Fabric. B. G. viii. 312.

§. IV. E. H. of particular PERIODS and NATIONS:

- 1500—1549. Roverus Pontanus, 1559 f. in opposition to Sleidan.
- 34—610. A. Espencæus, apophthegmes ecclesiastiques. 1578. 8.
- 1—450. Jac. Capellus. Sedani 1622. 4.
- 1—625. Jo. Conr. Danhaveri christeis. 1696.—1708. 4.
- 1—300. Conr. Horneii H. E. Brunsw. 1649. 4.
- 1—500. Jo. Henichii H. E. Rintelii. 1669. 1674.
- 700—1000. Geo. Calixtus. Helmst. 1657. 1661. 4.
- 1500—1600. Eliæ Ehingeri sæc. xvi. Francof. 1659. 4.
- 1—300. Balthasar Bebelius. Argent. 1669. 4.
- 300—400. Ejusd. seculum iv.—1679. 1680. 4.
- 1517—1730. Ejusd. H. E. recentior. Dresdæ 1731. 4.
- Ejusd. Ecclesia Evangelica et Judaica. 1673. 4.
- His operibus, historia rerum et dogmatum ecclesiæ egregiè illustratur.
- 1500—1600. Aub. Miræus, de statu religionis per Europam, Asiam, Africam, et orbem novum, libri iv. Helmst. 1671. 8.
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- 1500—1600. Jo. Fechtii tabulæ H. E. sæculi xvi. 1690. 4. et
- 1541—1613. H. E. seculi xvi. supplementum. 1684. 4.
- Roques, memoires de l'eglise, 1685, 1686, de reformatorum in Gallia persecutione. Paris, 1690. 4.
- 1—513. Seb. le Nain de Tillemont. memoires pour servir a l'hist. ecclesiastique. Paris, 1712. xvi. voll. 4to. Bruxelles, 1730. Paris 1730 xxx voll. in 12mo.
- 1—518. Ejusd. histoire des Empereurs. Paris, 1738. vi. tomis, 4. Bruxelles, 1692. 12.
- 1—200. P. Faydit. memoires sur les memoires de M. de Tillemont. 1695.—eclaircissemens sur l'hist.

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- 1— 800. Antoine Godeau. Brux. 1697. 8.
- 1600—1700. Andr. Caroli memorabilia ecclesiastica sec. xvii. juxta annorum seriem digesta, Tubingæ 1697—1702. 4.
- 1600—1710. Jo. Wolfg. Jægeri H. E. seculi xvii. cum parallelismo profanæ, Hamb. 1709. 1711. 2 voll. fol.
- 1— 200. Tho. Ittigii H. E. selecta capita. Lips. 1711. 4.
- 1— 200. Jo. Clerici H. E. duorum prim. secc. Amst. 1716. 4.
- 1600—1716. Memoires chronologiques et dogmatiques, 1723. 8. 4 voll. written by an anonymous jesuit.
- Caroli Sigonii H. E. libri xiv. e. MS. codice, bibliothecæ Vaticanæ editi. Mediol. 1734. 8. et tomo iv. operum Sigonii.
- 1—100. Jo. Laur. Mosheimii, institutiones H. E. majores, seculum i. Helmst. 1739. 4. This work is inserted with improvements in Mosheim's
- 1— 300. Commentarii, de rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum M. Helmst. 1753. an excellent specimen of an illustration of his
- 1—1750. Institutiones H. E. antiquæ et recentioris. 1755. 4.
- 900—1000. Jo. Mabillonii commentatio de statu ecclesiæ sæculo x. in præf. ad Acta SS. ordinis Benedicti. sec. v. Paris. 1685. fol.
- 1400—1500, Ejusd. anecdota ad H. E. seculi xv. in biblioth. Bremensi, vii. p. 1052.

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v. WALCH. pag. 181.—382.

2. Portugal and Spain. H. Floresii Hispania Sacra. 1753. xi. tomis. Hispanice.
3. France. Sammarthanorum Gallia Christiana. 1656. 4 f. 1744. 8 f.
4. England. Bede Fox. Harpsfield. Broughton. Smith. Fuller. Alford. Tyrrell. Collier. Anonymous, 1737. 3 f. Warner. Parsons. Fitzherbert. Goodwin. Usher. Stillingfleet. Innett. Nicéron. Heylin. Burnet. Strype. Trapp. Somerset. Diceto. abp. Parker. Godwin. Carte. le Neve. Willis. Sander. Walker. Durell. Twisden. Neal. Dugdale. Gale. Abingdon. Thoresby. Dart. Gunton. Hemming.
- Scotland. Thomson. Dempster. Conæus. Camerarius. Knox. Spotiswood. Petrie. Calderwood. Anonymous, 1732, f. Mackenzie, 2 f.
- Ireland. Sullevan. Ware. Porter. Usher. Sibthorp. Leland.
5. The Low Countries. Van Heussen. 1714 f. Brandt. 1719.
6. Italy. Ferd. Ughelli Italia sacra. 1644. 1722, x tomis. besides an infinite number of *local* histories. Walch. p. 235.
- Sicily. Rocchi Pirri Sicilia sacra. 1733 f. et in Thesauro Antt. et historiarum Siciliæ.
7. Switzerland. Ruchat. 1727. 6 tom. 12mo.
8. Germany. Hansizius, Germania sacra, 1727. f. Bertholdi Austria sancta. 1750 f.

Of

Of Bavaria, Bohemia, Prussia, Saltzburg, &c. Walch. p. 256.

9. Hungary. Melch. Inchoferus. Romæ, 1644.
Poland, Jo. Dlugossus. 1704. 4.
Transylvania. Anonymous, cura Ad. Frid. Lampii
editus, Traj. ad Rhen. 1728. 4.

10. Denmark. Erixi Pontoppidani annales ecclesiæ
Danicæ diplomatici. Hafniæ,
1741—1753. 4.

Sweden. Claudii Arrhenii H. E. Sueonum
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11. The Greek Church. Chytræus. Simon. De la Croix.
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anus. Paris. 1740. f.

Russia. Covell, 1722 f. Confett. 1729. 8.
King, 1774. 4.

J. G. Feverlinus, de religione
Ruthenorum hodierna, Gætting.
1745. 8.

Jac. Goari euchologion, sive ri-
tuale Græcorum. 1647.

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ta Diocletiani Imp. Acta sancto-
rum, et marmora Salonitana.

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Venet. 1755. 4.

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1. Syria. Bessoni. Terzi. Boschi. Gabriel Si-
onita. De la Croix. 1715. 8.

2. Armenia. Galanus. 3 vol. f. v. le Clerc.
B. U. t. i. p. 351. Mathurin
Veissier de la Croze. 1739. 8.

3. India. De la Croze, christianisme des
Indes. 1738. 8.

4. China. Trigaut. Schall. Pallu. Intorcetta.
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Mosheim. Kircher. Muller. Leib-
nitz. Lettres edifiantes et curi-
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enses, de quibus Fabricius, de
salut. luce Ev. p. 555. 563.

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6. Tartary.

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AFRICA. Fabric. S. L. E. c. 43—46.

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Schelstratenus. 1679. 4. Loescherus,
de patrum Africanorum meritis,
1724. 8.—Jof. Abudacni. hist.
Jacobitarum, 1733. 1740. 8.—
Wanslebius, 1671.

Alexandria.

Eutychius, 1658. 4.—Renaudot.
1713. 4.—Rehkopf. 1759. 4.

2. Ethiopia.

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—Geddes. 1696. 8.
Ortelius, 1746.—Tellezins, 1660. f.

AMERICA. Fabric. salut. luce Ev. c. 47—49.

Rob. Contæus, Amst. 1644, origines gentium America-
narum a Carthaginienſibus repetit. recté, ut opinor.

An Evangelium ab Apostolis etiam Americanis fuerit adnun-
tium, G. Moebius, 1692. H. Witſius Misc. sacr. t. ii.

Bollusius. 1603. Padilla. 1634. de Ribas. 1645. Bisselius,
1647. Gonz. d'Avila, 1656. Eliot. 1653. Raguénau, 1652.
De Castro, 1658. Chaulmer, amerique chrétien, 1659. J. Ma-
ther, 1688. Chr. le Clercq. 1691. Montoya. 1693. Mura-
tori, christianismo nel Paraguai, 1743. C. Mather, E. H.
of New England, from 1602 to 1698.—Fernandez. 1735. 8.

The CIVIL HISTORY of America. Fresnoy. iv. 318. v. 231.

Jo. de Laet, statu gentium Americanarum. 1643.

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This humane bishop, to his immortal honour, opposed the Spanish massacres, with the maxims of christianity.

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§. V. ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY and LITERARY HISTORY.

Jo. Alb. Fabricii bibliotheca ecclesiastica. Hamb. 1718. fol. —Lufignanus, 1580—de Vyon, 1607.—Poffevin 1708. 2f.—Bellarmine, 1719. 8.—with supplements, by Labbé, 1660. by Du-Saussay, 1684—by Cas. Oudin, 1686.

Magna bibliotheca ecclesiastica, Colon. Allob. 1734. fol. R. Ceillier. 1729—1747, xiv. tomes.—Gerhardi patrologia, 1673.—Meelfuhrerus, 1670.—Olearius, 1711.—Gul. Cave. tabulæ, 1674. chartophylax, 1687. hist. literaria, 1688. 1699. 1705. 1720. 1740—1743 Oxon. 1741. 1745 Basil.

L. E. Dupin. 1686—1711. xlvii voll. 8vo. Paris.

Amst. 1690—1715. xix voll. 4to.

Dupin. biblioth. des auteurs separez de la communion de l'eglise Romaine, du xvi et du xvii siecle. Par. 1718.

C. P. Goujet. biblioth. des auteurs ecclesiastiques du xviii siecle. Paris, 1736. 3 tomes, 8vo.

Jo. Grancolas, critique des auteurs eccles. 1716. 12.

Cas. Oudin, de scriptoribus eccl. ad an. 1460. Lips. 1722. 3 f

Scriptores de Joanne Baptista. To many writers in Walch, p. 402. I add, as an expression of merited esteem, an Enquiry into the divine missions of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, by W. Bell. M. A. 1761. 8.

2. The

The Life of JESUS CHRIST: by

Geo. Fabricius. Lips. 1566. 8. 1581. 8. latine.

B. de Montrevil, vie de J. C. 1637. 4. iv tomes. 1741. 12.

H. Xavier. 1639. 4. liber fabularum plenus.

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A. Sandini hist. familiæ sacræ. 1734. 8.

L. Offerhaus. de vita servatoris privata et publica.

Lud. de Saxonia—Jo. Huff.—Geo. Wirth—et qui harmonias evangelistarum composuerunt, de hoc argumento, omnium nobilissimo, scripsere. Singularia capita vitæ Christi, præsertim de passione et salutari cruce, innumeri scriptores illustrarunt. v. Walch. p. 408—444.

Lives of the Apostles. Dorotheus, Hippolytus, Nicetas, Abdias, and others in Fabricii codic. apocr. N. T. part II. p. 744. Perionius. 1569. 12.—L. Capellus, 1691. 8.—Cave. 1677. fol.—Fr. Spanheim. 1679. 8.—F. Burman.—Gruenberg. 1704.—Misc. sacra, by Lord Barrington. 1725. 8.

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L E T T E R III.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAST AND PRESENT
TIMES.—CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF MO-
DERN INFIDELITY. — OBSERVATIONS
ON THE FERTILITY AND EXTENT OF
THE JEWISH TERRITORY.— ON THE
PAGAN PRINCIPLES OF TOLERATION
AND THEISM.

My dear Friend,

THE foregoing review of the general his-
tory of mankind has led me into some
reflections on those characteristics, which are
either universal in our species, or discrimi-
nate particular ages and nations. An en-
quiry of this kind would be worthy of the
investigation of the Divine and the Philoso-
fopher: but I mean to give such a mere out-
line as presents itself to my mind, such as
may be filled up or effaced by abler hands.

The general character most observable in
the history of man, is that mixture of moral
good

good and evil, which discriminates him both from the more pure intelligences, and from the most depraved and irreclaimable. This middle nature is the ground-work of that system of religion, which God hath revealed for the instruction and government of mankind; which is adapted to explore our true characters, and to rescue, elevate, and advance them. Man, as a candidate and probationer for a higher existence, interests the intellectual universe in his conduct. He is placed on the confines of two mighty kingdoms of light and darkness, by a permissive providence contending, though with unequal arms, to make a conquest of humanity, to achieve its happiness or destruction. In this critical situation, he is himself the arbiter of his own destiny, free to choose, to which of the contending powers he will ultimately devote his allegiance. Whatever pejorates, corrupts, or debases his nature, throws him into the camp of the enemy: whatever elevates refines and perfects the Soul and Body, brings him back to his natural duty and subjection.

The first period of the human history, extending from the Creation to the Redemption, may be considered in three distinct intervals.

1. The

1. The ante-diluvian world was characterized by a *moral* apostacy, properly human, and resulting from the corruption of our compounded nature. Pure spirits cannot sin but by acts of intelligence, such as spring from envy or ambition. Spirits connected with matter are liable to become imbruted, and to sin not only by acts of the mind, but chiefly by animal passion and excess. This, I suppose, to be the true rationale of all the methods of divine wisdom to reclaim mankind: whose original apostacy and subsequent corruptions arose from the voluntary reversal of the constituent parts of human nature; by permitting the animal passions to dethrone reason. This revolt from God and Conscience was aggravated, both in its depravity and effects, by the goodness of the Creator, who had conferred in a very eminent degree the blessings of plenty and longevity on the first race of men. The abuse of these natural blessings was their specific enormity: and as they would not be reclaimed by the few examples of virtue, purposely preserved among them in order to maintain a tradition of primitive truths; that race, perhaps as numerous as any that have since existed, was destroyed by a deluge; the indelible traces of which are every
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where apparent, both in the face of nature, and in the records of all nations.

2. The post-diluvian world, we know not how soon, fell into polytheism, elementary, hero-worship, and symbolical. The pure light of the original theism itself, derived from revelation, was preserved by a divine intercourse with the race of Shem, which peopled Asia. This divine light, though never extinct, was universally obscured by the prevailing syncretism of true and false religion; when it was disclosed, with new lustre, to the patriarch Abraham, himself a virtuous polytheist, of a candid mind, open to conviction, and zealous in the reception and support of truth. The doctrine of the divine unity, and the essentials of the plan of redemption, were revealed to this eminent person, continued in his family, and established by the legislation of Moses. During the best times of the theocracy, these doctrines were maintained by that revelation only, against the bent and genius of the people who were enlightened by it; and who continually corrupted the purity of their religious system, by blending it with foreign rites and false objects of worship. A propensity so general and so inveterate, as to demonstrate that no other method, but that of express revelation, could have

have maintained the first principle of religion, amidst the idolatrous intercommunity, which was cherished as a social principle among all the ancient nations. The theocracy was so constituted, as to oppose this principle by a miraculous administration, and by a ritual at once contradictory to idolatrous superstitions and emblematical of the system of redemption.

3. From the first olympiad to the birth of CHRIST, mankind were characterized by the moral depravity and polytheism of both the former periods. Both these corruptions were carried to such extremes, that even a slight acquaintance with the true state of antiquity proves, that mankind did not avail themselves of their reason and wisdom, though highly cultivated, to recover the evanescent traces of natural religion, and to emancipate themselves from this double servitude of vice and idolatry. In this period, war and conquest were reduced to a system, and were the means of founding the four great empires; which were instrumental in preserving and extending revealed religion. This interval of DCCC years is distinguished by the successive æras of prophecy and philosophy: an illustrious evidence of a divine attention to the moral concerns of humanity. Prophecy was the counsel of the deity to au-
then-

thenticate his will. On the resettlement of the Jewish nation, it was discontinued, perhaps on purpose to make its completion the more illustrious, and its evidence unexceptionable. After the establishment of the Persian monarchy, the sacred writers ceased to register past transactions, and to predict future events. Then first, the Greek historians, unconscious of their subservience to revealed religion, took up the office of recording events ascertained by annals and public registers. Then first, the Greek philosophy was applied to the cultivation of reason and virtue by the Socratic school. About the same time flourished Confucius in China, Zoroaster in Persia; and even the barbarous nations in the north of Europe, exerted their reasoning powers on the most exalted speculations. The cultivation of philosophy, for four hundred years preceding the Christian æra, was subservient to so many excellent purposes, that it may justly be considered as a providential expedient, to preserve the influence of moral virtue; to demonstrate the inefficacy of reason, in discovering the primary truths of natural religion; and to give the utmost splendour to the gospel-revelation, by supplying all that anxious reason could not find, by restoring virtue and conscience to their just supremacy, by expiating sin, and by the gift of immortality. Thus,
after

‘after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.’ Thus, ‘Christ Jesus, of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.’

The christian æra is characterized in general by its two great discoveries of expiation and immortality. Of each I shall express my ideas in the sequel of these letters. At present, my Friend, let us run over the several periods of the christian history.

1. The history of the church *before* its civil establishment presents us with a scene of hostility between the powers of good and evil, more active and more ardent than had been heretofore disclosed on the theatre of the world. On the one part, we discern an agency worse than human, in the opposition both of men and demons to the author of our faith: combating his ministry, and accomplishing his death by calumny and envy; and employing every method to suppress his few and defenceless followers. To the first planting of the gospel succeeded those portentous heresies, which we read of with astonishment; whose baleful shade, exhaled from the oriental philosophy, obscured the rising glories of the new religion: and gave a specious colour, to those atrocious calumnies and fierce persecu-
tions

tions, in which idolatry and despotism united their utmost efforts. Contrasted with these dark shades, is the triumph of our religion, so conspicuous in the resurrection and divine honours of CHRIST; in the conquest and dispersion of the Jewish nation; in the purity and extension of the church, prevailing over obstacles humanly invincible, by means of the miracles, preaching, and writings of the apostles and evangelists, by the union of the christian name, by the faith of its converts, by their sanctity of manners, by their zeal of martyrdom founded on the certainty of their principles and the assurance of immortality.

2. For an equal period *after* its establishment, the church was characterized by that mixture of good and evil, which were the natural and moral effects of its tranquillity and temporal power under the christian emperors. In these times of peace and security, the church was enlarged both within and without the empire; its pastors employed their great learning and rhetorical style in combating the errors of false religion, and in illustrating the writings of the New Testament. Their unremitting contest with the hydra of heresy, had the good effect of perpetuating the original interpretation of the

the primary doctrines of christianity ; with the ill consequence of introducing into the church the great sources of its corruption ; a spirit of dialectic, productive of endless dispute and controversy ; and a spirit of domination, expressed in mutual anathemas and intestine persecutions : while the gloomy temperament of the African christians produced the absurdities of the monastic life, and every species of superstition and imposture.

3. The result of these corruptions was the dark millennium of Popery and Mohammedanism ; a long and dreary interval ; during which, an enthusiastic spirit of conquest diffused the Arabian imposture, over a dominion great and durable, as that of imperial Rome. Ignorance and superstition erected the temporal grandeur of the papacy, on the foundation of the northern paganism, supported for many ages by the cruelties, tyranny and artifice of its priesthood. Yet, in this sad depression of society, even in its darkest state, some rays of the celestial light kindled amidst the gloom, that enveloped Europe and Asia. The Saracenic fierceness was tempered by the cultivation of science : and the delusion of Popery was confronted in all its periods by a few enlightened and virtuous men, the witnesses of truth, her advocates and her victims.

Of

Of the three centuries, which have nearly elapsed since the revival of learning and the reformation of religion, I think we may discern three distinct characters, corresponding in some degree to the several powers of the human mind, invention, judgment, memory: which, though all are blended and in some degree inseparable in the operations of intellect, and in the state of society resulting from those operations, yet may justly be applied to characterize each of the preceding ages, from that quality which predominates in each. Your sagacity will anticipate the uses of this speculation, respecting the manners and principles of our own times.

In the Sixteenth century, the minds of men were agitated with a religious ferment, in part occasioned by the revival of learning, but chiefly by the discussions relative to church-government and reformation in the preceding age; which led the way to the great revolution begun by Luther. The age of the reformation may be considered as the age of invention. A spirit of enterprize and of heroism characterized the princes of that age. Leo X. and the popes his successors, Solymán the magnificent, the emperor Charles V. Francis I. Henry VIII. and queen Elizabeth, were the most eminent sovereigns that had ever been contemporaries on the thrones of
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of Europe. Every circumstance at this period concurred to excite the spirit of invention, in religion, literature, and the arts; in navigation and commerce; in war and policy. The three capital discoveries, of printing, the compass, and artillery, were now applied with emulation to enlarge the efforts of the mind; which long fettered in the dark, exulted in the first recovery of its force and freedom, and was even dazzled by the sudden light poured in upon it. Theories in religion, long lost or suppressed, were brought to light by the learning, genius and industry of the reformers. The scriptures now first published and translated, opened a new world of science: and christendom was astonished to find the religion of the New Testament, so directly opposite to that of the papacy. The spirit of invention exerted its powers in the fine arts, of poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, revived on the ancient models, by a just and bold imitation of nature, rather in her great and sublime, than in her beautiful and delicate exertions. Imagination seizes the sublime and the august by its native efforts aided by novelty and admiration; while the correct and elegant result from the slow process of imitation, art, and experiment. In Italy, while painting animated the canvas with unrivalled

ex-

expression, and lent its aid to tottering superstition ; poetry revived from its long slumber of twelve ages. It found or formed a language suited to its fine conceptions, and gave models of excellence to the rest of Europe. The dark side of this century shocks us with a portentous atheism, arising from the detection of popish superstition, from the first efforts of philosophy, and from the literary profligacy of those humanists, who imbibed and propagated all the corruptions of paganism, through an excessive fondness for the Greek and Roman classics. Popery exerted all its efforts to maintain its authority by its partial decisions and relentless persecutions. In the reformation itself, free enquiry, absurdly connected with a spirit of dominion, produced innumerable schisms ; while a spirit of fanatic sedition clouded the first dawn of liberty, and portended the enthusiasm and long civil wars, that agitated the next age.

The Seventeenth century was the age of erudition and criticism, of eclectic and experimental philosophy, of a rational and scriptural theology. The prevailing character was the cultivation of judgment and the powers of reason ; but with excesses or defects in each department of science. Literature and criticism, especially the verbal part of each, were carried to excess ; and ancient elegance
was

was lost and encumbered in the retinue of her critics and commentators: an evil, still adverse to those studies, which, by giving us the true picture of human nature, best promote the interests of revealed religion. The preceding age, on the dissolution of the religious foundations, had disclosed the rich treasures of literature, the copying of which was one of the best employments of the monastic orders in the middle ages. The discovery of these manuscripts revived the studies of humanity; and the art of criticism was employed with diligence and success in restoring and explaining the text of ancient authors. Different nations had their specific merit in this revival of true science. The Italians excelled in criticism on the writings of their renowned ancestors; the Dutch and Germans, in antiquities and literary history; the French, in ecclesiastical learning; the English, in philosophy and theology. In philosophy, all the ancient sects were revived and cultivated: stoicism, by Lipsius and Gataker; the epicurean system, by Gassendus; platonism, both in its original form, and in that which the school of Plotinus had fraudulently set up in opposition to christianity, was cultivated perhaps to excess in England; and produced a refined and philosophic enthusiasm. Yet in the last age, philosophy knew its province, and held
itself

itself in due subjection to religion. The eclectic, which alone has truth for its object, was so successfully introduced by Lord Bacon, as to have happily become the reigning philosophy.

Theology in the seventeenth century, which will ever be deemed an age of true and profound erudition, attained to so high a degree of perfection; that perhaps all the dogmatic or polemical discussions of late, might safely be decided by an appeal to the judgment of the great divines, especially of the English church, in the last century. They had a peculiar felicity at once of convincing reason, and persuading the will: and the great names of Cudworth, Cumberland, Tillotson, Scott, Stillingfleet, and many others, have had the glory of rooting up atheism, antinomianism, popery, enthusiasm, and every species of false religion: and of establishing on immoveable foundations the evidence and obligations of natural and revealed theology. I have insisted with peculiar approbation on the literary character of the last age; because I am firmly persuaded, that the best remedy for the errors of the present century, is to revert to the principles of the last. Science of all kinds was then reduced to a rational and moral certainty, founded on experiment, evidence, and just criticism. To their successors of the present
age

age those heroes of the human mind have left the province of collecting, arranging and completing their theories. With respect to our own nation, were we to fix on a particular æra, when all political and theological principles were ascertained with sufficient precision; and when all essential errors were excluded from the theories of learning, religion and government; should we err, in taking for our model the settlement that followed the revolution? shall we not attain to perfection in science, policy and religion, in proportion as we revert to the maxims of that epoch? which, distinguished by a true philosophy, and a state of society refined without luxury, established a free government without faction, uncorrupted, unincumbered; a protestant church, with a full toleration, free from the insults of popery, heresy and deism. This pure and happy settlement did not long continue in this ideal perfection: and in many respects, my good Friend, it is to be feared that we have been degenerating ever since. But before we come to the severe yet friendly talk of benevolent and deliberate censure, founded on truth, reason, candour, and on that charity which our religion inspires: let us do justice to the times in which we live, with full allowance of praise to its improvements of every kind. As our chief bu-
siness

finess is with the *principles* that influence the general character of the age; let us begin with the state of learning in the xviiith century. It should seem, that as the last was the age of reason and of judgment, this is the age of science, of method, and of memory. Like rich heirs, we are contented with collecting and accumulating the fruits of our father's industry, without being solicitous to augment or improve them. That invention is not our characteristic, might be shewn, were it not somewhat invidious, from an induction of particulars. Poetic invention expired with Milton and with Dryden, and was succeeded by harmony and correctness. This is easily accounted for. When philosophy and science are in a state of maturity, poetry declines. The former furnish the materials of erudition and exercise the judgment. The latter, the spontaneous produce of a rich imagination, withers with too much culture; and always degenerates, from that period, when its genuine enthusiasm is restrained by art and criticism. Hence, the earliest poets of all nations, Moses and David, Homer, Pindar, Lucretius; and of the moderns, Ariosto, Tasso, and our own Spencer, Shakespear, Milton, have the brightest and most vigorous imaginations. Milton himself lived too late, and his learning checked his enthusiasm.

siasm. Yet the *first* productions of correct composition are always grafted on the stock of original genius; as in Virgil, Horace, Boileau, Pope: their successors separate what they combine.

Among the causes of the decline of poetic genius, we might assign that anxious diligence, with which our best poets shun that rich source of sublime and delightful imagery, which flows from the sacred fountain of Religion. Had the author of the Messiah transferred those bright ideas, which he had borrowed from the scriptures, to his Essay on Man; the latter (like its noble concluding book, added at the instance of the illustrious commentator) would have been as instructive in its principles, as it is finished in numbers and composition. Had the pathetic author of the elegy in a churchyard seized on the shining topic of immortality, which religion presented to him, he would have rivalled the sublime of Young and of Milton. Your friend, perhaps too adventurous in this field of criticism, expresses his thoughts, such as they are, with the purest intentions; and, without detracting from the merit of great names,

—————Orientia tempora notis

Instruit exemplis————.

By known examples forms the rising age.

In

In Philology, the present age has given accuracy and splendour to the immortal productions of antiquity : yet, is it an ill-grounded apprehension, that ancient literature is rather the ornament of our libraries, than the accomplishment of our minds ? and that it has been supplanted, by the modish productions, which are daily read and forgotten ?

The eclectic Philosophy, both natural and moral, hath happily taken place of the sectarian, and is cultivated with assiduity. Yet, the philosophy of Bacon, Locke, and Newton, has not perhaps received any great accessions, beyond what may be deduced from the writings of those most eminent of men. If in aught we are originals, it seems to be in the mechanic arts, and in some physical discoveries.

In dogmatic Theology and in Ethics, it may be doubted whether we have made considerable advances. Our chief glory is in the elaborate defence and confirmation of the gospel against the inroads of deism. In the interpretation of scripture, philology and criticism have almost excluded the doctrinal and devout investigation of the sublime and spiritual sense of the inspired writers. If I am not much mistaken, the oriental and Jewish literature (especially of Philo, Josephus, and the early fathers) is more applicable to the
style

the style and sentiment of the old and new testament, than those parallelisms which have been so industriously collected from Greek and Roman authors.

Thus, with a freedom which perhaps is somewhat censurable, I have stated our improvements and defects in science. We or our successors may happily avail ourselves of past inventions ; so as to combine the distinct merits of the xvi and xvii centuries with those which give lustre to our own. Here I could easily indulge an utopian speculation, of the highest improvement of society resulting from such an union. But as in reviewing the former periods, we have, however imperfectly, contrasted the merits and demerits of each ; it is just and useful, to state impartially those obstacles to our advancement and perfection, which result from the present MANNERS : from an unsolid LITERATURE, a sceptical PHILOSOPHY, a neglect of theory and system in THEOLOGY, a prevailing LUXURY, and the effect of these causes, an avowed HOSTILITY to revealed religion. To investigate these important subjects with precision, is too arduous for one, who freely and familiarly writes to his friend and to the friend of human kind, such thoughts as occur to him, on the improvement of our own times.

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Among the causes of the modern Infidelity which is the great bar to all advancement of human happiness, I have assigned the neglect of solid literature. We are deemed a learned nation, and the age itself is generally addicted to letters. Yet, that Irreligion prevails, is a fact more evident to those who converse much, and generally with the world, at home and abroad, than to us who are happily sequestered from so large a sphere of observation. True science is certainly favourable to true religion; whose evidence cannot be ascertained, or its principles justly developed, without the aids of reason and literature; though its faith and duties impress themselves with energy on an honest and good heart. Literature is assiduously cultivated by immense multitudes of writers, as well as readers. Yet, in general, the aim of the former seems to be, to furnish the latter with a fugitive amusement. The chief recommendation of books consists in their dressing up in a pleasing form such parts of a subject as admit of embellishment, and too often presenting under those flowers the poison of asps.

Many parts of science, much in fashion, have no connection with revealed religion. Pure mathematics, and experimental physics, induce principles and modes of reasoning, which seem favourable to the investigation
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of abstract truth, yet in narrow minds are repugnant to that MORAL EVIDENCE, which we allege for the certainty of revelation. Even the argument from prophecy, though as strictly demonstrative as any geometrical process, would not convince an unbeliever addicted to mathematical reasoning; though the greatest of mathematicians felt and taught the demonstration that results from it. A minute mathematician, if prejudiced against revelation, would rank the argument from prophecy in the class of probabilities, perhaps of enthusiasms, and embarrass the proofs it affords with endless uncertainties: while plain reason perceives intuitively, that a great number of ancient and circumstantial predictions are proved by their completion to come from God. Those, who undervalue moral evidence, fall into scepticism, the fashionable malady; which infects all, who, pretending to be above vulgar minds, renounce that common sense which is the basis of truth.

The study of Nature, now so much in vogue, has this excellence, that it constrains us to look up to Nature's God. But unhappily, this study, especially in its minuter branches, botany, entomology, conchology, and other frivolisms, (in which, the science chiefly consists in burdening the memory with a barbarous and complicated vocabula-

ry) has little other tendency, than to divert the mind from looking into itself, and to lead it to contemplate the omnipotent Author of nature as a physical not a moral agent in his empire of Creation.

The ancient Philosophy, thoroughly explored, leads us directly to Revealed Religion. The true standard of human reason is to be estimated by the opinions of those who never heard of revelation. Whether any religious or moral truths are handed down to us, wholly unmixed with traditionary doctrines, is another enquiry: but, admitting or rejecting this opinion, human reason is perhaps seen to best advantage in the Greek philosophy; of which the ancient christians thought so favourably, as to esteem it a temporary revelation, and an emanation from the divine Word. The sounder parts of philosophy place natural religion on an immoveable foundation, and evince the *reasonableness* of revelation, the *necessity* of which is an evident consequence of the errors and defects of the ancient schools.

The abuse of the ancient philosophy, in the very few who search into its depths, consists in selecting from the mass those shining fragments, which place political and social duties, and some rational principles of natural religion in the fairest light:

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not reflecting on the impure mixture of scepticism and absurdity with truth, of turpitude with beauty, and of atheism or pantheism lurking in the most admired works of antiquity. Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, Antoninus, have more of this inconsistency, than common sense is now capable of: so that one may even affirm, that vice and impiety are no where taught with more effrontery, than in the writings of the most applauded philosophers. This it was, that brought on the schools of Greece the severe and just censures of St. Paul: censures founded on their voluntary abuse and arrogant concealment of those truths, which their cultivated reason might have improved to the best purposes. In fine, the uncertainty and endless disputes of both the ancient and modern philosophy, evince the necessity of a more clear, certain and authoritative guide of human life; such as is graciously afforded to men of all degrees of understanding, in the christian revelation; which imparts all useful information to our limited faculties, and gives sufficient scope for their exercise and improvement.

With respect to the study of religion itself, permit me to suggest an observation or two, to its enemies and to its friends, or rather to all candid lovers of truth. We should conduct

duct ourselves in religious enquiries, as the mathematician does with respect to his theorems. You, my friend, are a competent judge of the process of the mind in those severe abstractions. Having once demonstrated his theorem, the mathematician is not anxious to have the process of his demonstration always in his thoughts; but considers a proposition once proved, as an axiom on which to build future discoveries or practical uses. It would be wisdom to transfer this method to the investigation of religious truth. Thus we should make advances, and gain fixed points, in a chain of synthetic reasoning. The modern method, of perpetual discussion of its evidence, in the way of curiosity and literary debate, has a tendency to keep the mind in a very immoral suspense; and to divert it from habituating itself to the temper and precepts of the religion, thus made the subject of endless disquisition.

The New Testament includes its own evidence.

————— la larga ploia
 De lo Spirto Santo, ch'e difusa
 In su le vecchie e'n su le nuove cuoia,
 E fillogismo, che la m'ha conchiusa
 Acutamente si, ch' enversa d' ella,
 Ogni demonstration mi par obtusa.*

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* DANTE's paradise: cited by P. Simon, *Nouv. Observ.* sur le N. T. p. 104.

The most effectual way to be satisfied of the divinity of the scriptures, is to study them with constancy, candour, and attention; remarking, as we proceed, the progress we make in clear apprehension; separating obvious certainties from matters obscure and doubtful; and diminishing remaining doubts and difficulties by deliberate examination, with a pure and devout mind. This is a conduct which reason would approve, either in a religionist, or in a virtuous deist; and, with respect to the latter, it would probably terminate in full conviction.

To the religionist, christianity appears in all its beauty in the writings of the New Testament. Yet it is of use, in order to convince ourselves and others of the true nature, extent, and perfection of the christian faith and ethics, to form them into coherent systems. Since the reformation, divines of all communions have employed themselves very usefully in this way; and I know not any prejudice more fatal to the science of theology, and to the interests of revealed religion, than that contempt of systems, which is almost always an unequivocal proof of ignorance. Even those whose studies are conversant with scripture and antiquity, seldom form a compleat and consistent idea of the christian religion, till they

they have seen it reduced to system. The english divines, who excel all others in particular enquiries, must yield the palm to foreigners in systematic theology. The only objection of real moment against the study of foreign systems, is the imaginary danger of contracting prejudices in favour of particular churches and confessions. But this objection presupposes, what ought not to be admitted, an incapacity of judgment. Eclectic theology, attached to no sect, compares the best systems, and combines from all such principles as best accord with scripture, antiquity, and reason. The church of England was eclectic in its reformation; it retained, from the church of Rome a limited respect for pure antiquity; from the calvinists, their veneration of scripture; and from the lutheran and arminian systems, we may usefully adopt their erudition, method, and connected reasoning.

I make these observations with my usual freedom, on subjects perhaps too high for me, by way of anticipating some of the remedies for that fatal disease of our times, which I had principally in view in characterizing the past and present ages. It is a prevailing idea, that an attempt to extirpate, if it were possible, the Christian Religion, hath been carried
on

on in this century systematically and in concert by a series of writers and their numerous disciples. There are many circumstances which corroborate this apprehension. This impious enterprize, if it did not originate, has principally disclosed itself in France; and has been conducted by French writers in their own refined language, now become the general language of Europe. The dexterity of management in this insult on christianity, consists in assailing the popular superstitions of popish countries; and in the plausibility of certain objections, to which every science is necessarily subject; while the positive proofs of religion remain unshaken. To carry on this design, all the sciences have been pressed into the service of irreligion, in an enormous encyclopedia, the work of the whole conclave. The most fashionable writers of France and Italy, perhaps of Great Britain, have taken their instructions from the general of their order. The plan has been formed with a diligence and subtlety, which emulates that of the Jesuites, in their efforts to support the tottering throne of superstition; and the execution has been adapted to all the tempers and capacities of the human mind. To the learned and inquisitive, the philosophic and metaphysical, deism hath been proposed as a chain of reasoning ending
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in materialism. To the morose and melancholy, a system of fatalism hath been held up, which too often terminates in despair and suicide. While the far greater number of disciples to the new philosophy, have been confirmed in polished luxury and unbounded libertinism. In a speculative view, the late and present advocates of the modern irreligion, have not perhaps made any real improvement on the old systems of infidelity; which are still the magazines that furnish this beggarly troop, who skirmish in borrowed arms. Practically, they have been more successful; if their success is to be estimated by the calamities of the age and the corruption of manners: a success, of that extensive influence, that most men of fashion, and many of the people, are now pretty well emancipated from the slavery of Religion, and felicitate themselves with the epicurean poet:

Humana ante oculos foede cum vita jaceret
 In terris oppressa, gravi sub religione;
 Quæ caput a coeli regionibus ostendebat,
 Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans:
 Primum GALLUS homo mortales tollere contra
 Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contra;
 Quem nec fama Deum, nec fulmina, nec minitanti
 Murmure compressit coelum.——

The infinite danger is, lest the infidel system should be false, the security fatal, the tri-

triumph over religion productive of corruption of manners and temporal calamities, and the thunders of incensed Omnipotence be found both real and eternal. Such a thought awakens every emotion of compassion and of charity in the christian breast, and excites every effort to prevent the ruin of immortal beings.

The effects which have followed the spirit of irreligion are a convincing refutation, to all who can feel for themselves or the publick.

Christianity itself, with all its excellence and with all its evidence, has a difficult conquest to achieve, in effecting that conversion of the human heart, that harmony of principle and conduct, which is the glory of man and the triumph of religion. The rejection or weakning of the religious principle makes vice victorious, and without a rival. Christianity, imperfectly in many, yet in some degree in all its votaries, asserts the rights of conscience, reforms the honest, and reduces the worst to the absurdity of acting ill against conviction. The modern deism, an indulgent system, puts an end to this strife in the human heart: favourable to every one's leading propensity, it lays no uneasy restraints on its disciples. The man of fashion, the voluptuary, the gamester, the adulterer,
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the duellist, the traitor to the best interests of society and of his country, reposes with astonishing security on a system of other men's opinions, which lays him under no uneasy restraint, without adverting to the probable consequences of *Enmity with God*.

Irreligion, or no practical principles, is the usual effect of the rejection of christian principles; which alone have a just *authority* over those to whom they are revealed. That authority, light and easy to true believers (like the authority of the laws to good subjects) is such a restraint to the lawless, that they flatter themselves with liberty, when they shake off religion. They do indeed assume the liberty they aim at, an exemption from moral restraints. For, in the present light of christian knowledge, all restraints, except those of revealed religion, are reducible to the dread of civil penalties, the decorums of society, and the point of honour. Even the last and weakest of these motives, were it only to guard against the reproach of flagitiousness, the sense of shame, and merely for self-preservation, may produce some appearances of morality in infidels or even in atheists. But it is evidently confirmed, both by theory and observation, that in christian countries, natural religion holds no *authority*, otherwise than as a philosophic system; only binding, while

while it does not thwart some personal interest or imperious passion.

The modish irreligion often springs from the strongest and most imperious of the human passions (pardon the indelicacy of the terms) lust and lewdness. The christian religion chains this corruption of humanity, by the strong fetters of a temperate and chaste celibacy, or by connubial faith. Undisciplined youth begins the career of life with licentious indulgence, which usually terminates in irreligion. The religion of the gospel inspires and exacts purity of heart. Those who indulge to libertine pleasures dare not take a part in its exalted worship and august institutions. They must either renounce their vices, or apostatize (at least, till they recover from the delirium of passion) both from natural and revealed religion. This is indeed impracticable, till they renounce reason ; which so strongly confirms the obligations and sanctions of natural religion, that even the most abandoned must take up with some principles of the latter ; and form to himself a religion, without social and personal duties, without worship or homage to the Supreme Being, except in vain and empty declamation. Such as break loose from the bonds of revealed religion are guilty indeed of a prodigious absurdity, in supposing
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that their unbelief sets them free from the restraints of reason and natural law. Both require a moral conduct; with this great distinction—that the law of nature exacts a severe and strict conformity, with little and obscure encouragement, and the breach or observance of it are amenable to the tribunal of Divine JUSTICE: while the christian law exacts the same duty, tempered with paternal and filial affections, encouraged with present peace and with immortal prospects, and hoping for acceptance from the Divine MERCY.

It is usually deemed, rather an unpolite than false assertion, that deism originates from vice; and particularly from personal and sensual passions. If the censure of *unpoliteness* be of moment in this great question, it would be conclusive against all harsh remedies in every evil of human life; and we should be so absurdly tender of giving offence, as to withhold the most essential services. For the *truth* of the assertion, besides the obvious proofs of it, we have the highest authority, that of CHRIST himself, who inseparably unites the idea of belief with that of virtue, of incredulity and apostacy with that of vice and vicious prejudice. The perpetual circle of freethinking is from vice to error, from error to vice and mischief. It little differs, whether vanity or lust be
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the leading principle : the habits of life and opinion are first formed, and the system taken up at hazard, and pertinaciously maintained.

The many evils which flow from the polluted source of irreligion—in public life, depopulation, famine, war, and the unnatural connection of private opulence with public want ; in domestic circles, luxury, adultery, duel, suicide ;—have been *felt* to such a degree, as to have brought the more intelligent and considerate part of mankind, and many of high rank and character, back again to religion and the gospel. And it is with singular satisfaction, that I conclude these harsh but affectionate truths with some consolatory reflections.

Irreligion hath done its worst : the argument is exhausted : and human depravity can hardly be sagacious enough to invent new sophisms, impotently warring against Eternal Truth. Impiety of late, hath assumed a form that at once nauseates and terrifies, by that motley dress of blasphemy and ridicule, in which her ablest advocates have exposed her to the abhorrence of all serious minds. A conviction of the falsehood of the new philosophy gains ground from the surest monitor, experience of its mischievous effects. A veneration and study of the Holy Scriptures is reviving among us ; and their obscurities will
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be dispersed by the lamp of criticism, in proportion as they are studied with a pure mind. The argument from Prophecy, that palmary demonstration of the revealed will of God, begins to be properly stated and considered. This argument, simple and almost intuitive in its general result, gains new accessions of strength by every just interpretation of particular predictions. Those especially, which are of a moral and spiritual import, and which relate to the genius and intrinsic nature of christianity, are no less convincing, than such as have their completion in its history and fortunes. Accessions continually making to our discoveries in both kinds will terminate in a complete science: and this wonderful series of separate proofs, is, when combined in one, an irresistible argument of Divine Inspiration.

The argument from Miracles, is in its nature incapable of additional force; and it is strongest at the fountain-head. Revelation cannot otherwise be authenticated, than by the miracles of its first teachers. I hope to prove, in its proper place, that the gospel hath been so authenticated; and to represent this argument in its original clearness, defecated from the corrupt impostures, which have been blended in its streams, thro' the current of so many ages.

Above

Above all, the Christian doctrine and ethics are patronized by good sense and virtue. Even the enemies of the gospel acknowledge its utility; and it is but one step, in the scale of reason, from general utility to infallible truth. The fairest hope and even triumph of the gospel, amidst so much open and secret opposition, rests on its benign and celestial influence on human life; its consolatory and medicinal effects on the guilt and miseries of the world; that tender sympathy and benevolent spirit, which delights in the production of pure and unmixed good to individuals and to society; that transforming power, which it exerts over the human heart, purified by Faith, raised and ennobled by the great ambition of pleasing God, and of aspiring to immortality, by an humble reliance on that *mercy*, and a zealous obedience to those *laws*, which are the only means and conditions of our acceptance.

I have premised these general observations on the causes and effects of the fashionable irreligion; before I attempt the refutation of such particular objections against the Jewish and Christian revelation, which occur in a late celebrated work; which it has been the mode to read and to admire, perhaps the more, on account of those specious fallacies,

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the reception of which, is a sufficient proof of the propensity of the times. This able writer has developed the political system of the Roman Empire with so much eloquence and learning, as to merit general applause. In religious discussions, he is open to a just and candid censure for his frequent and unsupported assertions, which have an unfriendly aspect on both the divine revelations. The remaining part of this letter, shall be employed in detecting the fallacy of some detached passages in the first and second chapters of this history, wherein the Author insinuates that aversion from Christianity, which is more apparent in the sequel of his work.

Chap. I. page 25. ‘ Phoenicia and Palestine were sometimes annexed to, and sometimes separated from the jurisdiction of Syria. The former of these was a narrow and rocky coast; the latter was a territory, scarcely superior to Wales, either in fertility or extent. Yet Phoenicia and Palestine will for ever live in the memory of mankind, since America as well as Europe has received letters from the one, and religion from the other.’

We know, my friend, from whose quiver this shaft is borrowed: yet it is easy to blunt its point. In order to subvert the authority of the Pentateuch, which describes the
promised

promised land, as ‘a good and large land, flowing with milk and honey, and the glory of all lands;’ it is represented, on the reports of some modern travellers, as falsifying the description, as a barren soil and mountainous country, of so small extent, as to have been incapable of ever subsisting its numerous inhabitants. But neither the authority of the Old Testament, which is decisive in a question of this kind; nor that of Josephus, who minutely describes the whole face of the country in his own time; is compatible with the ideas of Toland and his followers; ideas, merely applicable to a desolated province of the present Turkish government. The same partial representation might be, with equal truth extended to Greece and Asia, and even to Egypt. The fertility of these countries, under the modern despotism, is not in any degree, comparable to their ancient and flourishing state. Agriculture, the most useful of arts, never made that progress in the world, which might have been expected. The Roman empire, which, according to our learned and exact historian, pag. 28, ‘contained
 ‘above sixteen hundred thousand square
 ‘miles, for the most part of fertile and well
 ‘cultivated land,’ was so imperfectly cultivated in its best times, that even Italy and Rome itself drew its subsistence from the
 O 2 harvests

harvests of Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa. Both Italy and the provinces were so desolated by the civil wars, as never to have recovered the fertility, for which the former was so renowned in the age of Varro. I much doubt whether the present state of Italy would better correspond to the luxuriant descriptions of the ancients, than the modern Palestine to the Canaan of the Holy Scriptures.

The wealth and subsistence of the Jewish nation, was peculiarly the result of an industrious and skilful agriculture, to which they were early and always addicted, as a means of keeping them a distinct people. The produce and population of a country, circumstanced as Judæa was, would from natural causes, exceed that of a manufacturing and commercial people. The soil in general was fruitful; and it was cultivated with such unusual diligence, that rocks and deserts were converted into gardens and vineyards, being covered with earth by the patient hand of labour. Josephus is full and explicit on this subject. He cites Hecatæus, a writer of the age of Alexander, as attesting the populousness, fertility, and beauty of the country. But beyond its natural advantages, and the rural occupations of its inhabitants: a particular Providence is most apparent, in the support of a people, who,
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from about three millions at the exodus, must have increased immensely, to have poured forth so great armies under its kingly government. The theocracy, of which the kings were only vice-roys, was visibly administered, with respect to the productions of the earth, by the vernal and autumnal rains. A convincing proof of the divine administration, in this respect, was the remarkable law of the sabbatic year. *Exod. xxiii. 10, 11.*

‘ Six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt
 ‘ gather in the fruits thereof: but the seventh
 ‘ year thou shalt let it rest and lie still’—compare *Levit. xxv.* No people could have subsisted under this and other laws of the Jewish polity, without a special and manifest interposition of Divine Providence.

With respect to the extent of Palestine, it should be observed, that its limits are to be differently defined, as they varied in different ages. A modern writer says, that it contained a spot not half so large as the kingdom of England; but no author, I believe, has reduced its territory to so small a compass as Wales. But nothing can be more fallacious, than the inference from the extent of Palestine, to the extent of the Jewish territory, in different periods of their history; which will receive considerable illustration by a short view of the sacred Geography. In the original

ginal grant to Abraham, the limits of the promised land, were extended to the Nile and the Euphrates. Exod. xv. 18. 'Unto thy seed
' have I given this land, from the river of E-
'gypt, unto the great river, the river Euphra-
'tes.' We need not anxiously contend, whether
by the river of Egypt, be meant the course of
the Nile, or the Pelusian arm of the Delta.
The most ample construction is favoured by the
subsequent history; in which Solomon is
said to have 'reigned over all kingdoms,
' from the river [Euphrates] unto the land
' of the Philistines, and unto the border of
' Egypt—for he had dominion over all the
' region on this side the river, from Tiphseh,
' even to Azzah.' [Gaza.] 1 Kings, iv. 21, 24.
So that the true boundaries of the kingdom of
David and Solomon, seem to have been li-
mited by all the eastern coast of the Mediter-
ranean, and by a line almost parallel to that
coast, drawn from Idumæa and the Elanitic
gulph, through the deserts of Arabia and
Palmyrene, to Thapsacus on the Euphrates.
The northern boundary was Hamath on the
Orontes. So that this noble and fertile king-
dom, in a delicious climate, with a capital
city the most celebrated of any in all the East,
will, it is hoped, be considered as a territory
worthy of those encomiums with which the
inspired writers, glowing with religious pa-
triotism,

triotism, have adorned it. Its providential reverse of fortune, as well as the present condition of its people, is one among many sensible demonstrations of the divine displeasure for their rejection of Christ; a displeasure signally manifested in the desolation of their country by the Roman conquest, the Crusades, and the Turkish government.

This topic has perhaps detained us too long from our author's subsequent observation on the perpetual servitude of Egypt, pag. 25. 'In almost every period of history, Egypt has humbly obeyed the revolutions of Asia. A Roman præfect was seated on the splendid throne of the Ptolemies; and the iron sceptre of the Mamalukes is now in the hands of a Turkish pasha.' Your memory and reflections will naturally recur to those circumstantial predictions of Holy Scripture, in which the fortunes of Egypt, and its perpetual servitude, from the first founder of its empire to the present time, are foretold with the precision of historians. It is a wonder next to that prophecy, that a learned and intelligent writer, so conversant with all antiquity, should not discern that surprising conformity that subsists between the declarations of the prophets and the state of the world: and seeing this truth in its necessary consequence, should not consecrate

crate his superior talents to the service of revealed Religion.

Our author's indifference on this subject is sufficiently marked in his favourable ideas of the Pagan principle of toleration. Ch. ii. p. 29. 'The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord.—Such was the mild spirit of antiquity, that the nations were less attentive to the difference, than to the resemblance of their religious worship.'

Among the chief obstacles to the reception of the christian religion, must be reckoned that aversion from it, which was generally entertained, not only by the people, but by the most learned and intelligent heathens, and even by the most virtuous of their magistrates and emperors. This hatred arose, not only from the general source of human corruption, at all times hostile to a religion, which shocks our pride by combating our depravity. But there were two occasional causes of this aversion: the confounding the christian religion with judaism; and the *unsocial* temper of both these divine revelations, which would

would admit of no fellowship, no communion, with the pagan establishment. Exclusive worship was the most unpopular of all religious pretensions. Tacitus, discerning as he was in all but religious truth, had no other idea of this noble principle, than of its being an intolerance. Hence those unjust invectives in the fifth book of his history.

‘ Moses instituted *new* rites, and *contrary* to
‘ those which are observed by the rest of
‘ mankind. By the Jews all things are held
‘ profane, which among us are sacred : and
‘ with them most things are lawful, which
‘ with us are abominable. Their rites of
‘ observing the sabbath, &c. however introduced,
‘ are defended by their antiquity.
‘ Other absurd institutions have prevailed among
‘ them by a base depravity. For the
‘ most profligate of men, *renouncing* their
‘ own religions, pay tributes and make collections
‘ to support the Jewish. From this
‘ cause judaism hath gained ground ; and because
‘ towards one another they exercise an
‘ inflexible fidelity and liberal compassion,
‘ but against all others a hostile hatred. The
‘ same maxims are adopted by their proselytes :
‘ and the first lesson they learn, is to despise
‘ the gods, to renounce their country, to have
‘ no attachment to their parents, children,
‘ brothers.’ The historian himself suggests the
true

true cause and complete vindication of this exclusive principle. ‘ They differ from the
‘ Egyptians in their persuasion concerning
‘ divine things. The Egyptians offer religi-
‘ ous worship to most kinds of animals, and
‘ to compound figures and representations.
‘ The Jews acknowledge one God and a
‘ mental worship. They hold them to be
‘ profane, who form images of the gods in
‘ human shape, with sensible materials: and
‘ deem the object of *their own* worship to
‘ be supreme and eternal, immutable, and
‘ without end. For this reason, there are no
‘ images even in their cities, much less in
‘ their temples. They do not permit this
‘ flattery to their kings, or pay this honour
‘ to the emperors.’ For this rational princi-
ple, so honourable and peculiar to the Jewish
nation, our historian loads them with ca-
lumnies: he sufficiently explains the cause of
his aversion, to be no other than the unsocial
genius of their religious tenets. ‘ At Jeru-
‘ salem, their capital, is a temple of im-
‘ mense opulence. The outer walls surround
‘ the city; the next inclosure, the palace;
‘ the inmost, encompasses the temple. Only
‘ Jews approach the doors: all, except the
‘ priests, are forbid to enter. While Asia
‘ was subject to the Assyrians, Medes, and
‘ Persians; the Jews were the most despised
‘ of

' of all the nations of their empire. After
 ' the Macedonian conquests, king Antio-
 ' chus, attempting to abolish their supersti-
 ' tion, and to give them the customs of the
 ' Greeks, was prevented by a war with Par-
 ' thia from making a change for the better,
 ' in this obstinate people. About this time,
 ' the Jews had kings of their own ; who che-
 ' rished their superstition, and to strengthen
 ' their power, assumed the priesthood. Pom-
 ' pey, by right of conquest, entered their
 ' temple ; and from that time it was reported,
 ' that there was no image of a deity within,
 ' and that the sanctuary was quite empty.'—
 ' When commanded by Caligula to place his
 ' statue in the temple, they refused and had re-
 ' course to arms. The founder of Jerusalem
 ' foresaw, that they should be subject to fre-
 ' quent wars, from the singularity of their te-
 ' nets. The nation, obnoxious to their own
 ' superstitions, is adverse to the religions of
 ' all the world besides.' This whole passage
 clearly shews the nature of pagan toleration,
 and the idea they entertained of a people
 who would not adopt the principle of associ-
 ating foreign worship with their own. This
 singularity was universally stigmatized both in
 the Jews and Christians, as an hostile hatred,
 an hatred of all mankind. For by the HOSTILE
 ODIUM, the ODIUM HUMANI GENERIS, is not
 meant

meant that either the Jews or Christians were 'hated by all men,' but that 'they hated all except their own sect.' This hard and unjust censure is indeed best refuted by the moral genius of the jewish peculiarity, and by the universal love which the christian religion inspires and enjoins. But the historian's imputation was apparently just, on the principles of paganism; which extended toleration to all religions, not simply as they gave no disturbance to government, but as they amicably associated with each other. Judaism and Christianity were not included in the prevailing toleration of all, even the most absurd religions, because they would not return the compliment, and grant the same indulgence to the rest.

The reason of this unsocial conduct results from the very nature of religious truth; such as the the unity of God, and salvation only by faith in Christ: tenets incompatible with the pagan ritual, which held all religions on an equal and consistent claim to common honours and the protection of the magistrate.

The returns which were made to the established religions both by judaism and christianity seemed, on the ideas of paganism, highly injurious and unreasonable; as the Roman republic, in the highth of its power, had
shewn

shewn a remarkable indulgence to Judaism. And the imperial government exerted its power against Christianity, because, instead of conformity to the state, and society with the other religions, it every where protested against them; the Apostles exhorting all men 'to turn from idols to the living God:' and the apologists for christianity, while under actual persecution, undauntedly increased the storm and incensed the magistrate, by employing their zeal and erudition in invectives against the established idolatry.

Permit me to adduce some authorities, which will explain the sense of antiquity on this subject, as it respects the Jewish revelation.

Pompey took Jerusalem, in the consulship of Cicero, who sarcastically styles him Hierosolymarius, and confirms Josephus's narrative; that the conqueror, though he found 2000 talents of sacred money in the treasury of the temple, yet left it untouched. Cicero's reason for this abstinence in the great Roman, strongly confirms our theory of pagan toleration. 'I do not suppose,' says the orator, 'that our excellent general was deterred from taking this treasure, by any reverence for the religion of the Jews, a hostile and a conquered nation: a religion, which even when Jerusalem flourished in peace, was

‘ was abhorrent from the majesty of this
 ‘ great republic, the dignity of the Ro-
 ‘ man name, and the institutions of our an-
 ‘ cestors.’ The Roman pride was piqued at
 the seeming insolence of a conquered people,
 who would honour no God but their own ;
 and who, on pagan ideas, could not be dear
 to heaven, because it was enslaved by the
 Roman arms. The resolute behaviour of the
 Jews, in rejecting the worship of their con-
 querors, was deemed the more faulty ; as
 it had the appearance of ingratitude to the
 Roman people, who had not only tolerated
 their religion, but honoured their altars with
 gifts and victims.

These honours had, for many ages, been
 paid to the temple at Jerusalem : and Provi-
 dence made the social genius of paganism in
 this instance, subservient to religious Truth ;
 which by means of this occasional worship,
 was insensibly imparted to nations not
 otherwise enlightened by Revelation. This is
 intimated in the prayer of Solomon at the de-
 dication of the temple ; ‘ concerning a stran-
 ‘ ger, that is not of thy people Israel, but
 ‘ cometh out of a far country for thy name’s
 ‘ sake—when he shall come and pray towards
 ‘ this house, hear thou in heaven thy dwell-
 ‘ ing-place, and do according to all that the
 ‘ stranger calleth to thee for : that all peo-
 ‘ ple

‘ ple of the earth may know thy name, to
 ‘ fear thee, as do thy people Israel.’ 1 Kings.
 viii. 41—43.

There are several illustrious examples of the honours done to the Jewish religion and temple by pagan princes. Cyrus restored the sacred vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had profaned to idolatrous worship: and in his famous edict, he acknowledges the LORD God of heaven to have given him an universal empire. Darius II. furnished daily victims, ‘ according to the appointment
 ‘ of the priests at Jerusalem, that they
 ‘ might offer sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king
 ‘ and of his sons.’ Ezra. vi. 10. Alexander offered a sacrifice in the temple agreeable to the Jewish ritual, by the direction of the high-priest; at whose instance, that conqueror granted to the Jews dispersed over all Asia the privilege of their law, and an exemption from tribute on the sabbatic years. The same immunities were continued by his successors. Heliodorus, the resident of Seleucus, sacrificed at Jerusalem; and the kings of Syria, except the frantic Antiochus, honoured the temple with their best gifts.

Philo, in his embassy to Caius, says, that the temple of Jerusalem was the first that received victims for that emperor. Vitellius sacrificed

sacrificed there in person. One of the causes of the Jewish war, was the seditious rejection of the Roman sacrifices, contrary to the prudent counsel of the Pharisees.

Augustus presented a daily sacrifice of a bull, the greatest victim, and two lambs; and the empress Livia adorned the temple with costly gifts and phials of gold: being charmed, says Philo, with the majesty and simplicity of the Jewish worship at the only temple in the world, where the invisible God was adored with vows and spiritual homage, without any image or sensible representation. Agrippa, his prime minister, in return for his magnificent reception by Herod, offered an hecatomb of sacrifices, and feasted the people. Augustus indeed commended his grandson Caius, that in passing through Judæa he had not sacrificed at Jerusalem: and Cicero, as we have seen, approved of Pompey, for slighting the Jewish worship. I account for this diversity of conduct and sentiment, by supposing that the honours paid by heathens proceeded from their pagan principle of religious intercourse and community: while the slights occasionally offered to the true religion proceeded either from a blind and partial contempt of foreign rites, or from resentment against the Jews for the unsocial genius of their worship. This refusal to as-
sociate

associate in any of the rites of paganism seemed in those times, the more unjust, unreasonable, and perverse; as the toleration extended to the Jewish religion was really indulgent, in the most flourishing times of the Roman republic and empire.

Josephus, in the fourteenth book of his antiquities, has preserved a large and curious collection of decrees and edicts, Roman and Asiatic, in favour of the Jews, granting them several immunities, and tolerating the exercise of their religion in all the cities of Asia minor: and their history abounds with examples of this lenity and indulgence.

As I know not a more illustrious monument of the respect and toleration of Judaism, or that better explains the principles of antiquity; I shall give a sufficient specimen of the substance of those decrees, which were laid up in the archives of cities, or engraved on brass in the capitol.

Of the first intercourse between the Romans and the Jews, A. U. DXCIII, we have a celebrated record in the most authentic history of that time, the first book of Maccabees, ch. viii, xv, and the effect of a decree of the senate, which then consisted of 320 members, was a recovery of their civil liberty, from the dominion of the kings of Syria. This alliance with the Romans, was

P

confirmed

confirmed, A. U. DCXVII. These were POLITICAL benefits: but after the conquests of Pompey and Crassus, and the settlement of the Roman government in Judæa by Gabinius, the RELIGION of the Jews attracted the attention of the republic.

Julius Cesar, in his second dictatorship, A. U. DCCVI, authorised Hyrcanus and his children to be ethnarchs of the Jews, and to hold the high-priesthood. In other edicts, he grants the Jewish nation a deduction from their tribute: and ordains that all the country of the Jews should pay an annual tribute to Jerusalem; except on the seventh or sabbatic year, because at that season, they neither receive the fruit of their trees, nor sow their land. After mention of civil immunities, the dictator decrees, ‘ that the same original ordinances should remain still in force, which concern the Jews with regard to their high-priests.’ Antony and Dolabella, consuls in DCCIX, confirmed all Cesar’s edicts in favour of the Jews, who expressed their gratitude for his good treatment of them, by an uncommon veneration for his memory.

Junius Gaius, a Roman pretor, in the following edict to the Parians, thus expresses the toleration of the Jewish religion.

§ The

* The Jews of Delos, and some other Jews
 * that sojourn there, in the presence of your
 * ambassadors, signified to us, that by a de-
 * cree of yours, you forbid them to make use
 * of the customs of their forefathers, and
 * their way of sacred worship---while they
 * are not forbidden so to do, even at Rome
 * itself. For even Caius Cæsar, in that de-
 * cree, wherein he forbade the Bacchanals to
 * meet in the city, did yet permit the Jews,
 * and them only, both to bring in their
 * contributions, and to make their common
 * suppers. Accordingly, forbidding the bac-
 * chanal meetings, I permit the Jews to as-
 * semble, agreeable to the customs and laws
 * of their country, and to persist therein.
 This is an honourable testimony to the inno-
 cence and purity of the jewish religion.

Dolabella, in a letter to the people of
 Asia, and particularly to the city of Ephesus
 their metropolis, grants to the Jews, an ex-
 emption from military service; and permits
 them the use of the customs of their forefa-
 thers, in assembling together for sacred and
 religious purposes, as their law requires, and
 for collecting oblations necessary for sacrific-
 es. These concessions have a fair and equi-
 table appearance. Yet when St. Paul, in the
 same city, taught that unpopular truth,
 * that they were no gods, which were made

‘with hands,’ Acts xix. 26. the pagan toleration was changed at once into a relentless fury, and the whole city was in an uproar. Yet on that memorable occasion, the asiarchs and the chief magistrates acted with moderation towards the apostle and his associates: while the Jews excited the persecution against them, lest they should be themselves involved in it, as the strenuous opposers of image-worship. In that history, we see the whole idea which was then entertained of toleration, both by Jews and heathens. The pagan toleration did not consist in liberty of conscience, but in sociability of worship, and mutual indulgence of all religious rites, not hostile to each other, nor dangerous to the public quiet. The Jews were permitted, out of regard to their superstition, as the pagan expression was, to abstain from heathen rites, provided they would not oppose the popular idolatry. The Christians could not keep this temperament; they were expressly commanded, every where to erect the religion of Jesus on the ruins of paganism: which, as I hope to prove in my next letter, was impracticable otherwise than by a divine power. In consequence, the heathen toleration, so mild and indulgent to all who would not molest the religion of the state, was converted into the most sanguinary persecutions. The best magistrates,

magistrates, the most virtuous emperors, held it meritorious to extirpate a religion, which professedly aimed at extirpating the established idolatry of the Roman empire, and of the whole world.

To resume our subject: in many of the Roman and Asiatic decrees, the Jews have military and other exemptions granted them on account of their religion, which they securely professed and practised, as Roman citizens.

‘ The decree of those of Halicarnassus:---

‘ Since we have ever a great regard to piety
 ‘ towards God, and to holiness; and since
 ‘ we aim to follow the Romans, the bene-
 ‘ factors of all men, and what they have
 ‘ written to us, about a league of friendship
 ‘ and mutual assistance between the Jews and
 ‘ our city; and that their sacred offices and
 ‘ accustomed festivals and assemblies may be
 ‘ observed by them—we have decreed, that
 ‘ as many of the Jews, as are willing so to
 ‘ do, may celebrate their sabbaths, and per-
 ‘ form their holy offices according to the
 ‘ Jewish laws; and may make their proseu-
 ‘ chæ at the sea-side, according to the custom
 ‘ of their forefathers.’

In a decree of the Sardians, besides the same indulgences respecting their religion, the magistrates attend to their scrupulous diet, and direct, that such sorts of food, as they es-
 teem

teem fit for their eating, may be imported into the city.

Other edicts to the same purpose, are omitted by Josephus, on account of their number and uniformity: but there are several testimonies in his sixteenth book, which will furnish us with some reflections on the design of Providence, in conciliating to the Jews, so remarkable a protection of their religious rights.

A. U. DCCXL, when M. Agrippa, the emperor's minister, and Herod, who derived all his dignity from the friendship of Augustus, were met at Lesbos; many Jews, residing in Ionia, laid before them their grievances: that they were not permitted to use their own laws; that they were compelled by the partiality of the judges, to prosecute their law-suits on their sacred days; were deprived of the money they used to lay up at Jerusalem; were forced into the army; and were obliged to spend their sacred treasure in the civil offices imposed on them. The king requested Agrippa to hear their cause; and assigned his friend and historiographer Nicolaus of Damascus, to plead for them. The speech itself is too long for this place, but well expresses the nature of the ancient toleration: 'We estimate that happiness, which all mankind enjoy under the Roman government, from
' this

' this very thing; that we are allowed every
 ' one to worship as our own institutions re-
 ' quire, and yet to live in peace with each
 ' other. And although they would not be
 ' thus treated themselves, yet do they [the
 ' Greeks] endeavour to compel others to
 ' comply with them; as if it were not as
 ' great an instance of impiety, profanely to
 ' dissolve the religious solemnities of any
 ' others, as to be negligent in the observation
 ' of their own towards their gods. We are
 ' indeed in a prosperous state by your means;
 ' but this is only in common with others: and
 ' we desire no more than this; to preserve our
 ' religion without any prohibition.---If the
 ' deity delights in being honoured, it must
 ' delight in those who permit that honour.
 ' None of our customs are inhuman, but all
 ' tending to piety and justice. Nor do we
 ' conceal those injunctions, by which we go-
 ' vern our lives---The seventh day we set
 ' apart from labour; it is dedicated to the
 ' learning of our customs and laws, and to
 ' reflection on them---This is therefore what
 ' we implore from thee, most excellent A-
 ' grippa: that we may not be ill-treated, de-
 ' spoiled of our goods, hindered from mak-
 ' ing use of our own customs, or compelled
 ' to compliances which we do not exact from
 ' others.' He then reminds him of the mag-
 nificent

nificent sacrifice he had himself made at the temple, and intreats him to confirm the immunities which the Romans had granted to the jewish nation and worship. The event was agreeable to the reasonableness of this plea, and Agrippa ratified the jewish privileges.

The injurious behaviour of the populace, as well in Libya, as in Asia, occasioned, four years after, a renewal of their privileges, both from Augustus and Agrippa. The emperor granted them ‘liberty to follow their
‘own customs, according to the law of their
‘fathers; that their sacred money be not
‘touched, but vested in the hands of the
‘receivers at Jerusalem; that they be not
‘obliged to go before any judge on the sabbath day, nor on the day of the preparation to it, after the ninth hour. That if
‘any one be caught stealing their holy books,
‘or their sacred money, whether it be out of
‘the synagogue or public schools; he should
‘be deemed a sacrilegious person.’

Josephus adduces these and other public records, in order to screen his countrymen from that infamy and odium under which they fell after the Roman conquest: which, considering the favourable treatment they had before received, cannot be resolved into any less cause, than the divine rejection. Commerce

merce and gain had carried great numbers of them into all parts of Asia and Africa, and to Rome itself. In these distant regions, they were providentially favoured and tolerated: and, under that toleration, their sacred books became known to the more inquisitive Gentiles, and the principle of the divine unity was disseminated. This we may consider as one of those signal preparatives, by which the christian revelation was rendered more easy of reception among the more intelligent heathens.

‘ I frequently make mention of these decrees,’ says the patriot-historian and apologist of the Jews, ‘ in order to reconcile other people to us; and to take away the causes of that hatred, which unreasonable men bear to us. As for our customs, there is no nation which always makes use of the same: and in every city almost we meet with them different from one another. But natural justice is advantageous to all men every where, both Greeks and Barbarians; to which our laws have the greatest regard, and thereby render us, if we abide in them after a pure manner, benevolent and friendly to all men. On which account we have reason to expect the like return from others; and to inform them that they ought not to esteem difference of positive institutions a sufficient cause

‘ cause of alienation ; but unite with us in the
 ‘ pursuit of virtue and probity.’ xvi. 6.

The greatest benefit, which revealed religion derived from the Pagan toleration, was the more ready and candid reception of the divine unity. In order to estimate the immense value of this discovery, the use and importance of the enquiry will authorize us to employ our attention, in examining how far this discovery of the unity and attributes of God was advanced by the most cultivated reason in the most enlightened age. Our learned historian’s observations, ch. ii. p. 31, naturally lead us to an investigation of this great topic ; which is the proper basis of a just and satisfactory demonstration of the necessity, the excellence, or real existence of a divine revelation.

‘ The philosophers of Greece deduced their
 ‘ morals from the nature of man, rather than
 ‘ from that of God. They meditated, how-
 ‘ ever, on the divine nature, as a very curi-
 ‘ ous and important speculation ; and in the
 ‘ profound inquiry, they displayed the strength
 ‘ and weakness of the human understanding.
 ‘ ——— In the Stoic philosophy, the work-
 ‘ man was not sufficiently distinguished from
 ‘ the work ; whilst, on the contrary, the
 ‘ spiritual God of Plato and his disciples, re-
 ‘ sembled an idea, rather than a substance.

The

‘ The opinons of the Academics and Epicu-
 ‘ reans were of a less religious cast.—The
 ‘ ingenuous youth, who, from every part,
 ‘ resorted to Athens, and the other seats of
 ‘ learning in the Roman empire, were alike
 ‘ instructed in every school, to reject and to
 ‘ despise the religion of the multitude. How
 ‘ indeed, was it possible, that a philosopher
 ‘ should accept, as divine truths, the idle
 ‘ tales of the poets, and the incoherent tra-
 ‘ ditions of antiquity ; or, that he should a-
 ‘ dore, as gods, those imperfect beings, whom
 ‘ he must have despised, as men ? Against such
 ‘ unworthy adversaries, Cicero condescended
 ‘ to employ the arms of reason and eloquence.
 ‘ ----The admirable work of Cicero de na-
 ‘ tura deorum is the best clue we have to
 ‘ guide us through the dark and profound a-
 ‘ byss. He represents with candour, and
 ‘ confutes with subtlety, the opinions of the
 ‘ philosophers.’ Note 6.

I have cited this whole passage, not in the
 view of controverting the author’s sentiments,
 but of drawing from them a conclusion equally
 obvious and important, in behalf of revealed
 religion.

I have often entertained a singular idea of
 Cicero’s character and writings, which you
 know, have been my favourite study. I con-
 sider that great man, as one of those para-
 gons

gons whom lord Bacon reckons among the triumphs and summits and miracles of human nature. Might it not be a particular design of the Deity to bring this great person on the most conspicuous theatre of the Roman republic, then at its highth of power and conquest, accomplished with all the strength and graces of reason and eloquence, and led by his academic principles to explore and collect the ample stores of Grecian wisdom?

The great end of providence in producing such talents, at such a period, might be, to give a proof of the utmost powers of the human mind in morals and religion; to evince the obligation of natural religion, and to supply its defects by that divine revelation, which in less than half a century after Cicero's death began to enlighten the world.

The admired treatise, *Of the nature of the gods*, is a melancholy monument of the inability of the human mind, with every natural advantage of genius and erudition, to erect a consistent system of pure and rational theism. From a review of that eloquent and learned treatise, I think it impossible to clear up Cicero's embarrass on the most important of all enquiries: and the failure of the best and ablest of all gentile writers, in his attempt to investigate the first principle of religion, evinces, not only the benefit, but the

the necessity of divine revelation. From the necessity of supernatural light to guide His children, we must infer that the Father and God of the universe has actually imparted that discovery, so essential to our duty and happiness: and, at once to verify and exalt so great a light, it is contrasted by the palpable darkness of polytheism, and the glimmering lustre of philosophy.

In order to evince the insufficiency of the most cultivated reason, in discovering the first principle of religion, it may be useful to give a short analysis of the celebrated treatise of the nature of the gods: the whole doctrine of which is founded on the sceptical maxim of the academy, that Ignorance is the source of Philosophy: this principle is kept in view throughout the work, which is a repository of the ancient opinions respecting a First Cause, as well as a record of Tully's own scepticism.

In the first book, Velleius gives a detail of the various opinions of philosophy, concerning the divine nature; and patronizes the absurdest of them all, that of Epicurus, which represented the gods in human forms, as indolent voluptuaries, totally regardless of physical and moral government.

Cotta, the academic, in a fine and delicate irony, refutes the epicurean impiety; but without dogmatizing, or establishing any truth

truth in opposition to it. Posidonius, in the fifth book of a lost treatise on this subject, had directly charged Epicurus with atheism: Cotta assents to the charge; yet, while he shews the falsehood of atheism, he does not attempt to give a rational idea of the divine nature.

Balbus the stoic, in the opening of the second book, remarks this defect in Cotta's refutation; and attempts to supply it, (with what success will soon appear) in a laboured argument for the existence of the gods. The unity is scarce ever mentioned in these dialogues; but this does not affect the inference I shall draw from the arguments of Balbus, which are rationally deduced from nature, ascending from effects to their cause. He proves a deity, weakly indeed from the Roman superstitions; but more philosophically from the argument of Chrysippus, that there must be a nature more excellent than man, because the works of nature transcend all human art or power. Yet while he reasons so speciously on the existence of God from his works: he admits not a first cause distinct from the world itself, and excludes in terms a pure spirit as the author of the universe. Of creation he had no idea; but imagines God and the universe to be coeval and co-existing: he is therefore a Spinozist

or philosophic pantheist: a flaw, which may be found in almost all the reasonings of ancient philosophy on this exalted subject. That such is the doctrine of Balbus, and the real opinion of Cicero himself, will appear to an attentive examiner of the arguments, by which he asserts a God and providence.

Balbus divides his argument for a God and providence into four parts.

In the first, he gives his proofs of a God, by which he means the soul of the world.

In the second, he considers the world as the body of the deity, to whom he ascribes a globular form or figure. He goes into a detail, of the magnificence of nature in the planetary system and constellations, which he supposes endued with intelligence and divinity. He enumerates several kinds of divinity, inherent in the heavenly bodies, in things naturally beneficial, in deceased men the benefactors of society; and, rejecting the letter of the poetic mythology, he supposes a divine nature allegorically expressed by it. From these wretched premises he draws a noble conclusion, religious in itself, though misapplied as to the object: that the deity (by which he means nature or the universe) ought to be worshipped with a pure mind, and without superstition. This I take to have been Tully's own religion; a proper
Spinozism,

Spinozism, adapted to the popular idolatry, and refined by a philosophic and moral worship.

Balbus justly triumphs in the argument from effects to their cause; which is displayed with all the charms of eloquence, and with as much accuracy as the state of science and philosophy would then admit of. He argues nobly both for the natural and moral attributes of the deity; he shews, that reason and virtue are specifically the same in God and man, and are derived from God to man; he demonstrates a providence from the art and design, so conspicuous in the universe, in the celestial bodies, in plants, animals, rivers, the earth; and infers with logical precision, a divine administration presiding over and preserving all nature.

On these premises, he builds his proofs, that a providence both general and particular regards human life and conduct. His principal proof is from the admirable structure of the human body, and from the powers of the human mind. He asserts that the world was made for the convenience and accommodation of the gods and men; and supports his argument by a detail of the fruits, animals, elements, which are subservient to human comfort and subsistence. He argues for a particular providence, from divination, miracles,

miracles, and a divine assistance granted to eminent persons; by which he does not intimate a moral influence, but an overruling energy of intellect and felicity of conduct in great and public achievements. For indeed, in all this interesting discussion, Lucilius insists much more on physical than moral considerations. He concludes well, and in character; that it is impious to frame arguments in support of atheism, whether they be meant in earnest, or only as a display of parts and sagacity.

Had Cicero concluded his treatise of the nature of the gods with this observation, and ended the enquiry with the second book; we should have considered his work as much more compleat than it now is; and the great author himself as far more consistent, and less sceptical in his religious system, than in fact he was. For to the wonder of his admirers, and to the disgrace of philosophy, his whole third book is employed in subverting the proofs and arguments of Lucilius, by the doubts and objections of Cotta; who, in the sceptical character of the Academic, involves in inextricable perplexity, his own and Cicero's creed on the fundamental article of all religion, a deity and a providence. He refutes the pantheism of Lucilius, which nearly resembled that of Spinoza; by his

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own atheism, which was that of Strato, that Nature is God.

Strato's atheism differed from that of Epicurus, in ascribing to matter, a plastic life or energy; while the latter, more consistently, held the material system to be inert, and its motion determined by the laws of mechanism. Both supposed matter to be discerped into infinite particles, while Spinoza held the universe to be one substance,

‘ Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.’

It is necessary to bear in mind the distinct impieties of these philosophers, in order to develope the intricacies of Cotta's argument; which terminates in the stratonic atheism, and, as Lactantius well observed, entirely subverts all religion.

Cotta, in the course of his argument, rallies the popular religions, in a manner quite inconsistent with his pretended respect for ancient rites and the pontifical law. This part is a curious detail of the ancient superstitions, all which he strikes at once out of his creed. The absurdity of those multiplied superstitions, is strongly exemplified in this authentic record of paganism: all parts of which, are verified by those remains of the ancient polytheism, which Vossius has described, and Montfaucon has represented, in
a manner

a manner which makes paganism visible to us. After giving the genealogies of the several Jupiters, and sons of Jupiter, and of the other deities, on the system of Euhemerus, as deified mortals; he rejects them all, together with the ideal divinities, the virtues, hope, fortune, and the rest, which constitute the most innocent and sentimental part of paganism.

From this easy conquest over the vulgar idolatry, he proceeds to triumph over Balbus and the stoics, by denying the *distinct* existence of a First cause. Here is a great chasm in the present copies of Cicero; and the learned Arnobius affirms, that the more religious pagans were so scandalized at Cotta's impiety, that they deemed it necessary, to forbid by authority, the reading of a work, which favoured the christian religion, by striking at the foundation of the pagan establishment. It appears from some fragments, and from the chain of Cotta's reasoning, that he had refuted the materialism of Balbus; (who gave the name of divinity to an active fire, or æther, that pervades the universe) by the atheism or plastic energy of Strato. His arguments against a moral providence still remain: they are the natural confectaries of his atheistic tenets; and are founded on the common topics, of the abuse

of reason, and the unequal allotment of reward and punishment. In his spirited management of the first topic, he says enough to convince any one, that reason is not capable of being our sole guide in speculative or moral theology. In the prosecution of the second, he makes no better deduction from the unequal distribution of things, than to assert, that we derive prosperity from the gods, virtue from ourselves; that is, in plain terms, that all effects proceed from natural causes, not a providence. He concludes with observing, that his reasoning on the divine nature, at least evinced the obscurity and difficulty of the enquiry; that he wished to be refuted; and politely adds, that Lucilius was the better reasoner. Yet in the beginning of the treatise of divination, Quintus Cicero expressly asserts, that Cotta's disqualifying expressions were merely not to affront the common notions of mankind; and that in the zeal of disputing against the stoics, he tore up all religion by the roots.

The religion of Cicero, as far as it can be collected from his writings and conduct, well deserves a diligent enquiry. Thus much is evident to an impartial examiner, that his religion was not that rational theism, which is the subject of Dr. Middleton's panegyric. ' Cicero's religion, says his learned biographer,

pher, was undoubtedly of heavenly extraction, built on the foundation of a God, a providence, an immortality.' On the contrary, in all his writings, in his real as well as philosophic character, scepticism is the prevailing feature. Whenever he dogmatizes on the divine nature, he is a Spinozist: and in all his notions, either of the existence, the unity, or the providence of God, he confounds the divine nature with that of the universe. In his first book of laws, where he has given a more accurate idea of natural religion, than in any other part of his writings; even here his principles terminate in pantheism, and are inconsistent with the relation between a moral governor, and accountable creatures. Hence, his moral and political system, specious as it, and adorned with the most persuasive eloquence, wants that strength and solidity, which can result only from the discovery of a divine mind, distinct from, and presiding over the universe. The popular religions he at once despised and venerated: for that, besides an external compliance with the religious establishment of his country, there was a mixture of real superstition, as well as of political artifice, in his character, appears in many particulars, especially in his extravagant project of deifying his daughter. His religion

ligion was a religion without a moral governor; his notion of immortality was a philosophical chimera, without a future state of personal existence; and his exalted principles of moral rectitude and political justice have no firmer foundation, than public utility, the natural parity of mankind, and the ambition of power and fame. Such are confessedly the ends of his ethic system of offices, so elaborately constructed for the use of his son, in order to open to his view, the shining path to the honours of a Roman citizen, when that character had lost its dignity and its freedom.

I do not lay the stress of this censure of Tully's religious principles, on any indiscreet expressions that have occasionally escaped him in his political orations, or elsewhere: but as there was an unguarded openness in his character, those passages too much confirm the conclusion I have drawn from his elaborate works, written in the close of his life, expressly on the subject of religion. Yet notwithstanding any just depreciation of his principles, my admiration of this great man, both in his political and moral character, perhaps, exceeds that of his warmest panegyrists. His literary excellence is as great and extensive in science as in eloquence. His philosophical writings include all that was best in the four greek sects, from the time
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of Theophrastus to his own. ‘ This,’ says a very competent judge, ‘ was the happiest age of philosophy; and there is little doubt, but Cicero pitched on the best thoughts of the ablest persons of that happy age, as the fittest to be communicated to his own citizens, and to receive the ornaments of his own incomparable style.’

The imperfect state of science in that learned and polished age, cannot be alleged as a cause of Cicero’s failure in investigating the primary truths of religion. These primary truths do not result from the minutiae of science, in which, chiefly consists our superiority to the ancients. Nature at large declares its author. Nature in detail, only confirms by infinite proofs, the obvious result of this august spectacle of heaven and earth. He, who could discourse like Tully, on the planetary system, wanted no argument which nature could suggest, to lead us to her author.

These are thy glorious works, parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous, fair; Thyself how wondrous then!

This argument led our eloquent philosopher no farther, than to divinize the universe, and the subtle flame or ether that pervades

vades it; thus excluding mind and will, intelligence and moral government, from a system formed on purpose to display them.

Though, on account of the eminence of his character, I have instanced in Cicero only, the blindness of nature, and the incapacity of reason in the discovery of religious truth: the same observation may be extended to philosophy at large. Their best opinions of the deity, even those of Plato, are involved in great obscurity, and with difficulty can be extricated from the mysticism that surrounds them. Plato's idea of a supreme and subordinate Gods, indeed so much resembles the Jewish revelation of the supreme Being and ministring angels, that it was probably derived from some traditions he had learned in Egypt, as well as from the conversations of Socrates; who came much nearer to the simple truth, than any of his followers; who, by refining on his principles, and affecting to conceal them, impiously frustrated the very end and purpose of philosophy. The more we investigate the greek philosophy, the more we shall be convinced of its duplicity, scepticism, and impious perversion of the doctrine of the unity. This, St. Paul assures us, was the specific guilt of the philosophers, because, that 'when they knew God,' or might have known him by his

his works, ' they glorified him not as God, ' neither were thankful ; but became vain in ' their imaginations, and their foolish heart ' was darkened.' What rendered them ' without excuse,' was, that when they knew or might have known the principle of the unity, they concealed it from the people, and perverted it by their favourite pantheism : till at length this great truth was so buried in the rubbish of superstitions, idolatry, and polytheism, that not even the genius, learning, and virtues of Cicero, could recover it from its obscurity.

What this great and accomplished man did not discover by the energy of his cultivated reason, the reason of all other men should despair of effecting : The discovery of a true system of religion and morality, founded on the real nature of God, as a pure spirit, distinct from, and presiding over his creation : and on the real nature of man, his impotence of obtaining acceptance of God, without an amnesty for the past, a rule of life and opinions, and a divine assistance : in fine, without an exprefs REVELATION of his own, and of the divine nature ; and of a future state, not merely of that metaphysical eternity which the ancients imagined ; but of distinct existence, personal consciousness and perception, and a proper immortality, either in misery proportioned to demerit,

merit, or in happiness, infinitely beyond all human desert.

If we may adventure on so high a theme, I would finish this speculation with a short sketch of those exalted and just ideas, which the scriptures give us of the supreme Being, and which alone are commensurate to the object of religion. No philosophy can parallel such thoughts as inspiration dictates on the divine nature, and our relation to him.

God in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. God said, let there be light, and there was light. Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. I am, that I am---Glorious in holiness --Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord---Thou art from everlasting, almighty, infinite; eternal, immortal, invisible; dwelling in light inaccessible. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. He condescends to behold the things in heaven and earth.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself, or, necessary self existence. No man cometh unto the Father, but by the Son. The glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ; in the form of God, and equal with God; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

Through

Through Him we have access by one Spirit, unto the Father. God is love. He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Wherefore, he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens.

The whole purpose of the deity in revealing his own nature to man, seems intimated in a passage, which is placed at the conclusion of the epistolary canon of the New Testament; and with which, it will be not improper to conclude these collections. *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy FAITH, praying in the HOLY GHOST, keep yourselves in the LOVE of GOD, looking for the MERCY of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, unto ETERNAL LIFE.*

REMARKS

[REMARKS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.]

I.

In my second letter, and in the remarks annexed to it, were displayed, the ideal riches of an historic library: the use of those tables, is to assist the unexperienced, in method, choice, and selection; and to prevent indiscriminate and injudicious studies. ‘When histories have the necessary authenticity and probability, there is much discernment to be employed in the choice and the use we make of them. Some are to be read, some are to be studied; and some may be neglected entirely, not only without detriment, but with advantage. Some are the proper objects of one man’s curiosity, some of others, and some of all men’s; but all history is not an object of curiosity for any man. He who improperly, wantonly, and absurdly makes it so, indulges a sort of canine appetite: the curiosity of the one, like the hunger of the other, devours ravenously, and without distinction, whatever falls in its way: but neither of them digests.’ Lord Bolingbroke, letter iv. p. 140. Polybius expresses this judicious caution with equal force and greater delicacy.—Παραπλησιον τι πασχοντες τοις λιχνοις των διηγητων. Και γαρ ικενοι, παντων απογευομενοι των παρακειμενων, ουτε το παρον, ουδενος αληθως απολαυουσι των βρωματων, ετ’ εις το μελλον, ωφελιμον εξ αυτων την αναδοσιν και τροφην κομιζονται, παν δε τουναντιον. οι τε περι την αναγνωσιν το παραπλησιον ποιουντες, ουτε της παραυτικα διαγωγης αληθινως, ουτε της εις το μελλον διαγωγης σοχαζονται δεοντως. p. 210. B. In another place, his lordship observes, with more truth than he was perhaps aware of, that ‘a serious and honest application to the study of ecclesiastical history, and every part of profane history and chronology relative to it, is incumbent on divines in their disputes with theists, because HISTORY ALONE CAN FURNISH THE PROPER PROOFS, THAT THE RELIGION THEY TEACH IS OF GOD.’ Lett. V. p. 176. The methodical study of original historians, and the application of history to religion and policy, are the objects of the foregoing reflections.

Malebranche

II. P. 160.

Malebranche has conducted his enquiry after truth, with a constant view to the mixed state of human nature, as disclosed to us by revelation. With much obscure, and, at best, uncertain metaphysic, he has interwoven the most interesting truths of theology and ethics. His *Recherche de la Verité*, first published in 1674, and improved in the succeeding editions of 1712, and 1735; has been twice translated into latin, 1687, and 1753. In this work, he admirably detects, book I, the errors of the senses, II^d, of the imagination, III^d, of the understanding, IVth, of the inclinations, Vth, of the passions: and in the VIth book, he lays down a general method of conducting the mind in the search of truth. See B. i. c. 4.

C'a toujours été, et sera toujours la mode, de regarder toutes choses comme problematiques; et de parler cavalierement des veritez memes les plus saintes, pour ne paroître entetez de rien. pref.—Les geometres n'aiment pas la verité, mais la connoissance de la verité. i. 2.—L'usage que nous devons faire de notre liberté, c'est de nous en servir autant que nous le pouvons. *ibid.*—Le peché originel n'a pas besoin de preuve —car chacun sent en soi meme un loi qui le captive et le deregule, ii. 7. éclaircissement.—L'ame, depuis le peché, est devenue comme corporelle, par inclination, i. 13. Tachons de nous delivrer peu a peu des illusions de nos sens, des visions de notre imagination, et de l'impression, que l'imagination des autres hommes fait sur nos esprits, ii. 6.—Le principal dessein de Dieu c'est l'incarnation de son Fils. Dieu a etabli l'ordre de de la nature, et permis le desordre qui y est arrivé, pour favoriser ce grand ouvrage.'

III. P. 178.

Ignorance is a leading cause of incredulity. Christianity is discarded, because it is not understood. Men, on other subjects of conversation very intelligent, betray on the topic of religion, a surprising ignorance and prejudice; and form the most imperfect ideas, both of its moral and dogmatic part, and even

even of its evidence, which may be learned from a few days' reading. Christian knowledge, if made an essential branch of the institution of youth, and of private enquiry, would soon dissipate the phantoms of infidelity. The writings of St. Luke and St. Paul, and the argument for the christian religion so briefly and so candidly stated by Grotius (in his 2d and 3d books, de veritate R. C.) would have a wonderful effect on the benighted mind of a fashionable unbeliever. He who would not be at the pains of acquiring these elements of the most important of all sciences, is scarce worthy to be reasoned with. A right conduct of the understanding, is the first step to reform the will: and it is much to be regretted, that some perspicuous and logical method of teaching the christian religion should not be adopted in all our seats of literature, and even in all our pulpits.

IV. P. 169.

To my plain apprehension, which is not perhaps congenial with that of a connoisseur, in the fine arts, it seems that few of them have been much improved since the sixteenth century. The Christian religion is wisely silent on this subject: it only forbids the *abuse* of the fine arts, either by licentious imitation, or by a luxurious attachment to them. Its principles refine and ennoble every employment of the human mind. The christian religion, having perfection for its end, and familiarizing the mind to the purest ideas of the fair and beautiful, tends to perfect the arts, in subordination to its ruling principle, divine love. An artist in painting, sculpture, music, poetry, and even in the inferior departments, would excel those of his profession, other things being equal, in proportion, as he was directed in his choice and execution by christian principles. The spirit of irreligion has debased and corrupted all the arts. It is itself a spirit of turpitude and vice, and banishes every delicate scruple, and that true sublime, which is inseparable from purity in the artist's breast. Let a good critic examine a poem or picture by the rules of christianity: he would perceive at once, that they are the rules of correctness and decorum, of grace and sublimity. To pursue this speculation one step farther: the representations of the
theatre

theatre are deemed a necessary part of the police of great cities. In England, they have found their way into our towns and villages: which seems no necessary or useful policy. These representations, if contrary to christianity, are unlawful, on the same principle as the pagan spectacles were held to be impious in the primitive church. When they are so unexceptionable, as to employ the chaste muse of the christian clergy, the theatres ought to be reformed from every indecorum, that may corrupt the heart or manners. Neither comic wit, nor tragic pathos, would be losers by this reform, which would only retrench the superfluities of the stage, by proceeding on this principle; that the christian religion is uniform and consistent, and perfects whatever it permits.

V. P. 177.

A very eminent philosopher, baron Wolff, in his ethics, part I. § 282, thus characterizes the learning and religion of the present age. ‘*Quoniam doctrina solida sine soliditate propagari nequit; nostro autem hoc seculo, quo dominantur opiniones confusæ, quæ religioni, virtuti ac integritati morum interitum minantur; et quibus per consequens felicitas generis humani in præsentissimum periculum adducitur: doctrina solida maxime opus est, ut a deviis in viam rectam reducantur errantes. Nostro imprimis seculo, omni animi contentione id erat enitendum, ut soliditas, intellectualis virtus (§ 265) promoveretur: consequenter, pessimè de humano genere merentur, qui juventutem a soliditate revocant.*

‘*Nemo est, qui nesciat, materialismum ubivis terrarum hodie invalescere, ac summo cum fastu propagari, quasi soli sapiant qui sectæ huic absurdissimæ addicti sunt. Religio in contemptum adducitur, et qui non omnem tollere videri volunt, eam nescio in quod monstrum vertunt. Luxus indies majora capit incrementa, et vana gloria fovetur. Antiqua fides evanescit, et fraudi locum facit. Felices se existimant, qui cupiditates suas explere possunt, in omne libidinis genus proni. Continuè de calamitatibus sunt querelæ, quarum tamen contradictorii ingenii homines ipsimet sunt auctores. Quo tandem evasurus sit hic rerum status, divinare haud adeo arduum*

‘duum foret.’ Such were the sentiments of the most rational philosopher of this age, in his last and best work, written in 1750, on the most sublime principles of ‘Moral Perfection.’ Some eminent divines *presaged* better things of the present age, than *our* experience hath as yet verified. See J. F. Buddeus, *de bonarum literarum decremento nostra ætate non temerè metuendo*, 1714, and in his *Misc. Sacra*. II. 266. J. G. Walchii oratii de incrementis, quæ nostra ætate studium theologiæ cepit, 1725, both cited by Bp. Law, in his excellent considerations on the theory of religion, 1765, p. 228. Buddeus contrasts the improvements of science, with the ill effects of popery, p. 271, had he lived longer, he would have added, the ill effects of deism, and the necessity of reverting to the christian religion, as the only remedy of public evils, the only source of public and private felicity.

VI. P. 184.

Our first protestant archbishop set the example to the church of England, in systematic theology. Thomæ Cranmeri locorum communium libri XII, iterum editi Londin. 1621. This illustrious prelate was seconded by other great names in Ireland: Jac. Usserii corpus theologiæ christianæ, Dublin, 1638 4. Rogeri Boylii summa theologiæ christianæ, Dublin, 1681. 4, commended by Walch. *biblioth. theolog.* i. 232. compare Buddeus’s excellent history of dogmatic theology, *isagog.* II, I. p. 378, and his own elaborate systems moral and dogmatic, which, with the other works of that most learned, perspicuous, and candid lutheran, are, in my judgment, the best guides we can follow in sacred studies.

VII. P. 194—199.

Hecatæi Abderitæ eclogæ sive fragmenta libri de historia et antiquitatibus sacris veterum Hebræorum. Gr. et Lat. edidit Petrus Zornius, 1730. 8. These fragments are preserved in the first book of Josephus, against Apion, and in the ninth book of the evangelical preparation of Eusebius. See the *biblioth. Germ.* xx. 68. xxxi. 105. and a dissertation on the law of the sabbatic year, in the same bibliothèque, xxx. 83.

Of

Of the fertility of Palestine, consult Reland, Palest. lib. i. c. 57, & Buddeus, H. E. i. 400. The causes of its desolation are given in the prophet Jeremiah, ix. Pliny, H. N. v. 15. Supra Idumæam et Samariam Judæa longe lateque funditur; pars ejus Syriæ juncta, Galilæa vocatur: Arabiæ vero et Ægypto proxima, Peræa, asperis dispersa montibus, et a cæteris Judæis Jordane amne discreta. Reliqua Judæa dividitur in toparchias decem, quo dicemus ordine, Hierichuntem palmetis consitam, fontibus irriguam.—Orinen, in qua fuere Hierosolyma, longe clarissima urbium orientis, non Judææ modo. Compare Herodotus, I. 1. II. 159. III. 5. VII. 89. That by Cadytis in Herodotus, is meant Jerusalem or the holy city, I think is certain, from its being mentioned in connection with the defeat of king Josiah, at the battle of Megiddo. Συροισι περὶ τὴν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας ἐπορεύσαντο ἐν Μαγδόλῳ ἐνίκησεν. μετὰ δὲ τὴν μάχην, Καδύτιν τὴν πόλιν τῆς Συρίας εἰσάγων μεγάλην εἰλε. ‘Necos fought a battle against the Syrians in the plains of Magdolus, and after he had obtained the victory, he took the great city of Cadytis,’ in the opinion of Herodotus, little inferior to Sardis, the capital of Croesus.

Cellarius, ii. 368. David fines imperii ad Euphratem, cui adposita est Thapsacus, protulerat; ut, terminus ab oriente juxta Thapsacum, fuerit fluvius Euphrates, ab occasu Gaza in finibus Ægyptiorum.

Hamath, 1 Chron. xiii. 5, is called Antioch in the chaldee paraphrase. Jo. Matthiæ Hassii regni Davidici et Salomonæi descriptio, Norimb. 1739. fol. This writer professedly treats of the extent of the kingdom of Judah; he investigates the situation of Hamath on the Orontes, p. 262, of Tadmor, p. 263, and of Thapsacus: and he draws this conclusion, p. 270. terminos imperii Davidici et Salomonæi ad Euphratem revera pertinuisse.

Dr. Grew, in the philosophical transactions, No. 330, computes that Palestine contained thirteen millions of acres, being equal to one fourth of England and Wales, and thirteen times larger than Holland.

Shaw’s travels. Lond. 1757, p. 280. ‘If we take in the whole extent of the land of promise, from Hamath to the river of Egypt, and from the coast of the Mediterranean to the deserts of Arabia, it will contain cccclx miles in length; and by bounding it no farther to the eastward than with the me-

‘ridians of Hamath and Damascus, it will contain near c miles
 ‘in breath. The extent of it indeed, from Dan to Beersheba
 ‘which is often mentioned in scripture, as the more settled and
 ‘permanent possession of the Israelites, does not exceed cxx
 ‘miles. Yet even reduced to this length only, considering the
 ‘great fruitfulness of the whole, the number of its inhabitants,
 ‘together with the many cities and villages that belonged to
 ‘it: the holy land was so far from being an inconsiderable
 ‘spot of ground, as some authors have misrepresented it, that
 ‘(exclusive of what it was in the reigns of David and Solo-
 ‘mon, and many ages after) it must have been always re-
 ‘garded as one of the most opulent and considerable kingdoms
 ‘of the east.’

IX. P. 199.

The prophecies concerning the revolutions of Egypt, are arranged and illustrated by Bishop Newton, in his xiiith dissertation. The learned reader will peruse with singular pleasure Vitringa on Isaiah, xix, and compare Ezekiel xxix—xxxii, with the Greek historians of the reigns of Cambyfes, Ochus, and Alexander.

X. P. 176—209.

Jo. Baptistæ Ottii spicilegium sive excerpta ex Fl. Josepho, ad Novi Testamenti Illustrationem. Ejusdem παραλειπομένα seu omissa quædam a Flavio Josepho. Lugd. Batav. 1741. 8.

Jo. Tobizæ Krebsii observationes in Novum Testamentum e Flavio Josepho. Lipsiæ, 1755. 8.

Jo. Bened. Carpzovii sacræ exercitationes in S. Pauli epistolam ad Hebræos ex Philone Alexandrino; præmissa sunt Philoniana. Helmst. 1750. 8.

Ejusdem stricturæ theologicæ et criticæ in epistolam S. Pauli ad Romanos, adpersis floribus ex Philone Alexandrino. 1758.

These are excellent specimens of scripture criticism, especially where things are regarded rather than words.

Decreta Romana et Asiatica pro Judæis, ad cultum divinum per Asiæ minoris urbes securé obeundum, ab Josepho collecta, in libro xiv archæologiæ, et restituta ab Jacobo Gronovio. Lugd. Batav. 1712; inserted in Havercamp’s Josephus.

Ludov.

Ludov. Alb. Krebsii decreta Romanorum pro Judæis facta, e Josepho collecta : adjunctum est decretum Atheniensium pro Hyrcano pont. max. commentario historico grammatico critico illustrata. Lipsiæ, 1768. 8. Gronovius makes this just observation on the Roman decrees in favour of the jewish religion. Est hoc splendidissimum tempus, quo ipsius Dei nomen ab Judæa sic paulatim tenebrosis idolorum ineptiis immixtum intra eadem moenia audiri cæpit, quæ modo nihil nisi *μῆταιον* complectebantur; et Romani, licet tunc perditissimi, illi tamen fuerunt, qui suis mandatis, illum Deum et cultum ejus, quo nihil mirabilius, propugnaverunt. Gronov. ad decreta Rom; & Asiatic. p. 54.

XI. P. 223.

Mosheim, de rebus Chr. ante Const. p. 17. expresses his astonishment at a passage of Cicero, de invent. i. 29, in which that great man represents it to have been the popular opinion, that the philosophers were atheists. ‘ In eo autem, quod in
‘ opinione positum est, hujusmodi sunt probabilia : impiis apud
‘ inferos pœnas esse preparatas; eos qui philosophiæ dant ope-
‘ ram non arbitrari, Deos esse.’ He cites Juvenal, xiii. 86, who confirms this idea, of the atheism of the philosophers.

Sunt in fortunæ qui casibus omnia ponunt,

Et nullo credunt mundum rectore moveri.

Dr. Bentley, in his 53d remark on Collins, says, ‘ it is evi-
‘ dent, to a sagacious reader, that Tully gives two in-
‘ stances of probables, which really he thought false.’ But Mosheim’s inference is the more conclusive, as it is drawn, not from Tully’s private opinion, but from the prevailing opinion of that age. And this Dr. Bentley acknowledges in a manner the more convincing, as he wrote that passage with a bias in favour of philosophy. ‘ The first of these about the torments
‘ of hell, was then a current, passable, probable assertion:
‘ and the second likewise, that philosophers were atheists, was
‘ a staple mob opinion: especially at that time, when Lu-
‘ cretius, Amasinius, and other epicureans, were the sole re-
‘ tailers in latin; that sect having in that language got the

‘start of the rest.’ The sect of Epicurus prevailed among the polite and opulent gentiles, as did that of the Sadducees among the more considerable of the Jews: and both induced such a destitution of religious principle, as loudly proclaimed the necessity of the christian revelation. The more we investigate the greek philosophy, even of the most virtuous sects, especially that of the stoics; the more we shall be convinced of their duplicity, scepticism, and impious perversion of the doctrine of the unity, by their favourite pantheism. The following passages of the learned Buddeus, are a key to stoicism: ‘spiritus nomine, subtilissimum aliquod corpus illis venire: animam nostram, igneam corporeamque esse asseruit. Jam vero, cum et eorundem judicio, anima nostra pars sit essentiae divinae, hanc quoque corpoream esse necesse est.—ex hisce intelligitur, quid Dei nomine stoici indigitaverint; nimirum, spiritum, hoc est, corpus subtilissimum, per materiam ei coeternam diffusum, eamque informantem et unum animal, scilicet mundum, constituentem. Hinc, quem nos Deum dicimus, illi mundum, naturam, universum appellitant.’ *Analecta philos.* pag. 168. et 341. 343. Hæc scilicet animo meo sedet sententia, Græcanicam philosophiam omnem, quanta quantafuit, et atheismi et spinozismi labe fuisse infectam. This important truth is amply confirmed and illustrated by the accurate Brucker, in his critical history of philosophy.

XII. P. 208.

Of intercommunity, and foreign worship at Jerusalem, see Josephus, *antiqq.* iii. 15. 3. iv. 6. 8. and Philo, *de vita Mosis*, lib. i. p. 648. B. This principle, and flattery to their conquerors, had so infected the Jews themselves, that even their two best writers were not ashamed to countenance it. Philo speaks with approbation of the impious honours of the apotheosis, p. 994—1013. and Josephus absurdly interprets the law in Exodus xxii. 28, ‘Let no one blaspheme those Gods, which other cities esteem such.’ *Ant.* iv. 8. §. 10. & *contr. Apion.* i. 33.

Diodorus, lib. xxxiv. eclog. 1. clears the meaning of Tacitus’s odium humani generis, from all ambiguity.—συζησαμενους δε το των Ιουδαιων εθνος, παραδοσιμον ποιησαι το μισος το προς τους ανθρωπους. δια τουτο δε και νομιμα παντεως εξηλλαγμενα καταδειξαι, το μηδενι αλλω εθνει τραπезης κοινωνειν το παραπαν, μηδ

ΕΥΝΟΕΙΝ. and a little before, p. 524. αἰκοινωνητούς εἶναι, καὶ πολε-
μίου; ὑπολαμβάνειν πάντας.

XIII. P. 220.

Quintilian's character of Cicero, will authorise the idea here given of him on Lord Bacon's fine observation, de augment. scientt. iv. i. The Roman critic, x. i. applies to Cicero's eloquence, a panegyric still more suitable to his philosophy. Nam mihi videtur M. Tullius, cum se totum ad imitationem Græcorum contulisset, effinxisse vim Demosthenis, copiam Platonis, jucunditatem Isocratis. Nec vero quod in quoque optimum fuit, studio consecutus est tantum, sed plurimas vel potius omnes ex seipso virtutes extulit immortalis ingenii beatissima ubertate. Non enim pluvias, ut ait Pindarus, aquas colligit, sed vivo gurgite exundat; DONO QUODAM PROVIDENTIÆ GENITUS, in quo totas vires suas eloquentia [Philosophia] experiretur.

Dodwell's apology for Cicero's philosophical writings, prefixed to S. Parker's translation of the treatise of moral ends. Compare Brucker. H. C. P. II. 34. 44. discussing the question, Cicero an atheus? he concludes, 'non magnopere a viris doctis refragamur, qui non satis certum in tanto dogmate hæsisse Ciceronem queruntur. p. 50.

XIV. P. 232.

Buddeus de Spinozismo ante Spinozam, §. 19, thus expresses his judgment of the theology of the four celebrated sects of greek philosophy. Platonica nec atheismo favet nec spinozismo: Epicuræa, non spinozismo quidem, sed tamen atheismo: Stoica spinozismo quam proxime accedit: Aristotelica, ut atheismo citra controversiam favet, ita post stoicos ad spinozismum quoque quam proximè accedit. Add his observations on the Barbaric or eastern philosophy, §. 21, 22, especially that of China: which abundantly confirms our theory, that our present just notions of natural religion are themselves derived from revelation, though perfectly consonant to reason; which though 'clear enough to PERCEIVE truth when proposed, is not generally strong enough to DISCOVER it.' Bp. Warburton, D L. III. 5, who cites Cic. de Orat. III.

31. nam neque tam est acris acies in naturis hominum & ingeniiis, ut res tantas quisquam NISI MONSTRATAS possit videre: neque tanta tamen in rebus obscuritas, ut eas non penitus acri vir ingenio cernat, si modo adspexerit. This fine thought is thus applied to the case of revealed religion by one of its best advocates. 'Had not revelation discovered the true principles of religion, they had without doubt continued altogether unknown. Yet on their discovery, they appeared so consonant to human reason, that men were apt to mistake them for the production of it.'

XV. P. 225.

Cic. N. D. III. 16. Sit sane Deus, ipse mundus, hoc credo illud esse *sublime candens, quem invocant omnes Jovem.*

Quare igitur plures adjungimus deos?—Cum fruges cerealem, vinum liberum dicimus, genere nos quidem sermonis utimur usitato: sed ecquem tam amentem esse putas, qui illud quo vescatur Deum credat esse? Such was Cotta's, such was Tully's theism; more rational however than that of their modern countrymen. See Dr. Middleton's letter from Rome, p. 44. D. Whitby, *irrisio dei panarii Romanensium.*

N. D. II. 28, his fabulis spretis ac repudiatis, Deus pertinens [f. pertingens] per naturam cujusque rei, per terras Ceres, per maria Neptunus, alii per alia, qui qualesque sint, quoque eos nomine consuetudo nuncupaverit, hos deos venerari et colere debemus.

XVI. P. 228.

I adopt the judicious observation of the Abbé Olivet on the conclusion drawn by Balbus from the survey of nature, c. 53. 'mente consilioque divino omnia in hoc mundo ad salutem omnium conservationemque admirabiliter administrari.' Rien de mieux conclu. Les preuves d'une providence divine sont magnifiquement étalées par Balbus; mais c'est dans la bouche d'un Chrétien, qu'elles ont une force invincible, et non dans celle d'un Stoicien. Car que veut il dire par sa 'providence des dieux,' lui, qui ne reconnoit pour tout principe intelligent, que le feu de l'éther? C'est à dire, une partie de la matière qui arrange l'autre, p. 148.

II. i. Tam

II. 1. Tum Balbus, eundem equidem mallem audire Cotta, dum qua eloquentia *falsos* deos sustulit, eadem *veros* inducat. But to supply this defect, he adopts the spinozism of Cleanthes, 9—11. Deum esse mundum, omnemque vim mundi natura divina contineri. Justly might the learned and candid Buddeus advance this position in his *analecta philosophica*, p. 343. ‘Hæc scilicet animo meo sedet sententia, Græcanicam philosophiam omnem et atheismi et spinozismi labe fuisse infectam.’

Bayle, who is never so much in his element, as when ‘wallowing in the mire’ of obscenity and impiety, gives an accurate account of spinozism in his article of the author or rather the reviver of that species of atheism, Benoît de Spinoza. Compare his article of Stilpo. In general, it may be asserted, that the scepticism of Bayle himself, and of his favourite philosophers, is an argument of decisive weight, to determine a wise and virtuous man to seek for certainty in revealed religion. Of Spinoza’s death, extremely similar to that of Mr. Hume, though not quite so marked with levity and affectation, there is a curious account in Nieuwentyt’s religious philosopher, pag. x. Lond. 4to. 1724.

XVII. P. 226.

Cic. N. D. III. 2. Cotta professes to believe the religion of the state on mere authority; but expects of Balbus, convincing reasons for his religious opinions. Compare Lactantius, II. 7. A remark of Balbus in the course of the conversation, is too applicable to most of the reasonings of antiquity on the highest topics of natural religion. The disputants do not seem in earnest, or actuated by the love of truth: and the dialogue-form of Cicero’s philosophical works, makes him often sacrifice the most important considerations to the decorum of the composition. c. 8. Tum Balbus; equidem adtulisse rationes mihi videor: sed eas tu ita refellis, ut cum me interrogaturus esse videare, et ego me ad respondendum compararim, repente avertas orationem, nec des respondendi locum, itaque maximæ res tacitæ præterierunt.

C. II. Naturæ ista sunt omnia cientis et agitantis motibus et agitationibus suis. and c. 13. Illa [natura] cohæret et permanet, naturæ viribus non deorum. This is the stratonian atheism.

atheism. Compare Brucker, i. 846. vi. 245. Buddeus de Spinozismo, p. 316. de atheismo, p. 45. Strato ipsam materiam, ex qua mundus hic compositus est, pro deo habuit; vel, ut Cicero loquitur, 'omnem vim divinam in natura sitam esse censuit.' If there needs any apology for bringing these impieties into view, I would observe that they furnish an invincible argument for the necessity of a revelation. Its actual existence, its utility, and perfection, follow progressively in the order of rational evidence.

XVIII. P. 229.

The weakness of Cicero's reasoning on the Being of God, is equally observable in his pretended refutation of Prophecy. A writer of great eminence, speaking of his arguments in the second book of divination, observes, that 'though pressed with all the advantages of Cicero's rhetoric, they have really no force against pagan divination, and therefore, surely none against scriptural prophecy.' Bp. HURD. serm. i. p. 21. Lipsius de Constantia, i. 21. passes this censure on the books of divination and of fate. 'Ciceronis hic naufragium video, qui providentiam maluit tollere, quam deliberare aliquid de humana libertate. Ita dum homines liberos fecit (ait eleganter antistes Hipponensis) fecit sacrilegos.

De divin. I. 5. Studio contra stoicos differendi, deos mihi videtur funditus tollere. Compare Augustine, de C. D. v. 9. Lactantius, II. 8. Arnobius, p. 126. edit. 1603.

It would require a separate discussion to examine the religious system of Cicero in his treatise of laws. His ideas of natural justice, and the foundations of positive law, are the noblest that are to be found in gentile antiquity. Yet his principles, carefully examined, terminate in his favourite pantheism, and in making the soul of man of the same essence with the soul of the universe: a doctrine destructive of all moral obligation, because destructive of reward and punishment. But I shall professedly resume this subject, when I attempt, in the course of these papers, to state the philosophic and christian doctrines of immortality.

XIX. P. 230.

There are several dissertations on the moral and religious character of Cicero, and on the theological system in his writings, which I have not had an opportunity of inspecting.

1. Jo. Philippi Treureri diff. de theologia Tullii.
2. Jo. Casp. Haferungii Cicero Theologus. Witeb. 1701. 4.
3. Jo. Dan. Gross. diff. de theologia Ciceronis, Argent. 1696. 4.
4. Jo. Zimmermanni diff. de theologia Ciceronis, in Museo Helvetico, vol. I. part iii. p. 374—439. Tiguri, 1746. 8.
5. 'Trinitatem Ciceronianam, secundum quam, exemplo Ciceronis, tres personæ sunt tantum tres relationes' ex Stillingfleeti vindictis SS. Trinit. 1697. 8, recenset Buddeus, in isag. p. 1126. a. vid. p. 258, de atheismo Cic. objecto. & p. 1199.
6. Jo. Matth. Gesnerus in chrestomathia Ciceroniana 1717. 8. providentiam divinam ab Cicerone negatam fuisse affirmat. conf. Buddeum, de atheismo, p. 98. Turretin, de la verité de la R. C. 1730. 8. p. 42. suiv.

7. M. T. C. de natura deorum, cum commentariis Petri Lescaloperii, S. J. in quibus omnis veterum gentium ac philosophorum theologia excutitur, Paris, 1660 fol.

Every reasonable man, one would think, should concur with Lactantius in his judgment of Cicero's religious character, II. 3. Intelligebat Cicero falsa esse, quæ homines adorarent. Nam cum multa dixisset, quæ ad everfionem religionum valerent, ait tamen non esse illa vulgo disputanda, ne susceptas publice religiones disputatio talis extinguat, &c. Multi philosophorum religiones sustulerunt; verum autem scire, divinæ est sapientiæ. Homo autem per seipsum pervenire ad hanc scientiam non potest, nisi doceatur a Deo.—Nota Ciceronis vox est, utinam tam facile vera invenire possem, quam falsa convincere. See the same eloquent apologist, on the spinozism of the philosophers, II. 6, which he refutes on their own concessions. Est ergo aliquis artifex mundi Deus; et seorsum erit mundus qui factus est, seorsum ILLE qui fecit. I. 17. Romanæ philosophiæ princeps, et amplissimo sacerdotio præditus, commentitios ac fictos deos arguit; quorum cultus, superstitiones pene aniles esse testatur—nam totus liber tertius de natura Deorum omnes funditus

funditus religiones evertit ac delet. Quid ergo a nobis expectatur amplius? num eloquentia superare possumus Ciceronem? minime id quidem. Sed fiducia illi defuit ignoranti veritatem, quod ipse simpliciter in eodem opere confitetur, ait enim facilius se posse dicere quid non sit, quam quid sit, hoc est falsa se intelligere, vera nescire.

XX. P. 232.

Malebranche, iv. 6. distinguishes the *rational* study of nature from the *frivolous*: 'La veritable connoissance de la nature nous fait connoître et admirer la puissance, la grandeur, et la sagesse de Dieu. Car enfin il semble que Dieu ait formé l'univers, afin que les esprits l'étudient, et que par cette etude ils soient portez a connoître et a reverer son auteur. De sorte que ceux qui condamnent cette etude, semblent s'opposer a la volonté de Dieu. Yet in the next chapter, he condemns the micrology and frivolism of this science. 'Les hommes ne sont pas faits pour considerer les moucheron; et l'on n'approuve pas la peine que quelque personnes se sont données, pour apprendre comment sont faits les poux de chaque espece d'animaux, et les transformations de differens vers en mouches et en papillons. Il est permis de s'amuser a cela, quand on n'a rien a faire, et pour se divertir. Mais les hommes ne doivent point y employer tout leur tems, s'ils ne sont insensibles a leurs miseres. Ils doivent incessamment s'appliquer a la connoissance de Dieu et d'eux memes; travailler serieusement a se defaire de leurs erreurs et de leurs prejugez, de leurs passions et de leurs inclinations au peché, rechercher avec ardeur les veritez, qui leur sont ies plus necessaires.'

LETTER

L E T T E R IV.

OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PAGANISM.

Dear Sir,

IT hath been a favourite object of my literary curiosity, to observe the natural notions of religion which have actually existed among mankind; especially those rational and political theories, which have been the offspring of legislation, science, and philosophy. My reflections have often turned on this simple and obvious idea; either, mankind have discovered a religion worthy of God and man; or, such a religion is not discoverable by human reason. To ascertain the fact, let the learned and inquisitive examine all the histories of mankind, either in their barbarous or polished state: let them explore all the pretended but unevidenced revelations, the Vedam, the Zend-avesta, the Sadder, the Koran; the Mysteries, Oracles, and religions of gentilism: let them disembroil the intricacies of Philosophy, grecian and barbaric; and

and peruse the recitals of living manners in ancient or modern travellers: hath there ever existed among them all a religion, in which a wise and virtuous man can acquiesce? or, does the history of the human mind present us with any other spectacle, than of gross superstition, absurd polytheism, monstrous idolatry, obscene and barbarous rites, savage sacrifices, religions destitute of morality, atheistic philosophy, and in the best view much falsehood and imposture blended with a little truth, the immortal offspring of the Father of our spirits? The conclusion is evident: either we must live and die without paying due homage to the God of the universe; or we must be taught by Himself, how to serve Him acceptably.

The accurate histories which antiquity hath consigned to us of polished and philosophic nations, in a state of gentilism; and the discoveries of the moderns respecting the state of savage life, especially on the continent and islands of the new world; both concur with convincing evidence in a full proof, that revealed religion only, can enlighten the reason and direct the will of man in divine and moral duties.

The gentile religions, as we have seen, derived strength and lustre in the popular opinion, from that *social principle*, which, regardless

gardless of speculative truth, tolerated all the superstitions of the human mind not directly subversive of civil government. A farther support was added to gentile error, by that philosophic *pantheism* invented by the learned and contemplative, as a cover for the absurdities of the vulgar polytheism. The connection of the subject, as well as the order of the argument, now leads us into some detail of the civil *establishment* of paganism: and from an induction of circumstances, to place the strength and power of that establishment in its true light; contrasted with the apparently obscure and inadequate means by which it was subverted, and the christian religion was demonstrated to be THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD.

Paganism had this great advantage of revealed religion, that it was prior to it in point of time; and was in full possession of the human heart, when the law and the gospel put in their pretensions. The question of the priority of theism to idolatry, is easily decided by the authority of profane history, as well as by the evidence of scripture. From both it is apparent, that the first religion of mankind was that pure theism, which was derived originally from the author of our nature. This religion, before the flood, was untainted with idolatry; the specific enormities

mities of the first race of men were practical and moral, consisting in the abuse of those blessings, which resulted from the happy constitution of the earth.

The religion of Adam consisted in filial obedience to the will of God, who imposed one restraint adapted to the compound nature of man, and designed to inure him to assert the supremacy of reason over his animal passions. We know the violation, and we feel the consequences of it, in the subjection of reason to appetite, and in the traductive disorder and corruption of humanity. Human nature is a palace in ruins, whose broken columns and disfranged marbles, shew its original magnificence.

From the authentic history of the fall, literally understood, follows the only solution of the origin of moral evil, from the imperfection of created beings, the pride and envy of the highest order of them, and the depravation and misery of man consequent on a wrong election. A consequence so far from improbable, that we see it verified every day in the sentiments and conduct of all, except such only as are reformed by christianity : the rest of mankind constantly repeating the original error, of preferring a present seduction and apparent sensible good, to an eternal advantage and an immutable duty.

Enoch

Enoch walked with God: that is, he excelled in all the tenets and duties of natural religion, or rather of revealed theism: the only code or system of which in those early times is reducible to what have been since called, the VII precepts of the sons of Noah: which enjoined the worship of one God; forbidding all impiety; violence; impurity; and fraud; instituting civil government; and prohibiting to eat the blood of animals: a precept well adapted to humanize the ferocity of uncivilized man. This system is perfectly suitable to the common notions of the human mind: it includes, in a short and perspicuous creed, a sublime idea of God, a solid and efficacious piety, a pure worship, simple morals; with probably no positive duties, except the observance of the sabbath, and the institution of sacrifices, not otherwise to be accounted for, than as an emblem of some future expiation. A total silence on the great doctrine of immortality, is observable in every revelation prior to that of CHRIST. Thus, the primitive religion consisted in the knowledge and exclusive worship of the Divine Unity; in a morality agreeable to right reason; in sacrifices eucharistic and expiatory, implying the constant hope of a REDEEMER.

Had man continued in this simplicity of
belief

belief and practice; it is probable, that the world would have needed no intermediate revelation, between that of paradise, and the accomplishment of the promised redemption. For all revelation is the effect of some pressing exigence, or inextricable difficulty of human nature: it is *added* to natural religion, *because of transgressions* both speculative and moral.

The general corruption, which, before the flood, filled the world with lust and violence, continued to operate afterwards, together with the additional depravation of the great principle of the unity. A portentous idolatry gradually overspread the earth: it consisted in the worship of the elements and heavenly bodies, of deceased men, of brute animals, of imaginary and symbolic figures, of statues, and other visible representations of the several objects of false religion.

That idolatry was successive to theism, and a corruption of the first religion, will appear with sufficient evidence from the records of history; and is apparent from this circumstance; that polytheism itself is purest near its source, and the ultimate depression of the human mind, in respect to divine knowledge, was the result of the accumulated corruptions of many ages.

The first monument of idolatry seems to have been that stupendous tower, which the
united

united labour of mankind erected in honour of Belus or the Sun, on the plains of Shinar. Chaldæa was the original theatre of the most ancient species of idolatry, the worship of the heavenly bodies. The delusion arose from a very natural cause, admiration of the greatest and most splendid parts of the universe, rendered still more awful by their regular motion and beneficent effects. The primitive nations of the East, leading vacant and pastoral lives; the heat of their climate concurred with their simple manners and employment, to keep them abroad in a wide extent of champain country. Here they were accustomed to behold the magnificence of nature, the effects of the elements, and the radiance of the glowing sun. The heat of their climate led them to pursue their employments in the night; which presented to their view a serene sky, the splendour of the moon, and starry heavens. Such majestic objects, amidst the stillness and solemnity of nature, heightened by an untaught fancy (ever carried to admiration, rapture, and sublimity) excited first the wonder, then the worship of the spectator. Thus the material world, and its brightest and largest bodies, the sun and moon, the air, the stars, and fire, and their apparent effects, when salutary and beneficent, excited their gratitude; when baleful and malignant, wrought
S upon

upon their superstition, to adore and deify them.

The author of the book of Job, attentive to the decorum of his poem, exquisitely describes this primitive idolatry. ‘ If,’ says the venerable Arabian,

I beheld the sun when it shined,
Or the moon walking in brightness;
And my heart hath been secretly enticed,
Or my mouth hath kissed my hand;
This also were an iniquity to be punish’d by the
judge;
For I should have denied the God that is above.

xxxi. 26—28.

The worship of the elements and heavenly bodies was not only the most ancient, but (in the judgment of the author of the book of Wisdom, xiii. 6, 9.) the most innocent species of idolatry. ‘ For they peradventure err, seeking God, and desirous to find him.’ But superstition degenerates, from bad to worse: and this idolatry was soon succeeded by the worship of deceased men, who had been founders of civil policy, legislators, kings, conquerors.

The Ægyptians, the most ancient civilized nation, were the first who deified their deceased kings; thence they proceeded to all the kinds of idolatrous worship, which are speci-

specifically prohibited in the second law of the decalogue. The Ægyptian superstition, from elementary and planet-worship, and the deifying of dead men; became so stupidly depraved, as to worship birds, beasts, and plants; and not only the most noxious beings in nature, but the monsters and chimæras of the most wild and distempered imagination. This celebrated nation, whose manners, and taste in arts are almost as disgusting as their superstitions, were the inventors of statues, or of rude blocks cut into some resemblance of the human form, which plainly denoted that their imaginary deities were once mere men. Yet this people, who corrupted all the ancient world with a barbarous polytheism, were themselves originally theists. The patriarch Abraham found Abimelech king of Gerar, and Pharaoh king of Egypt, both acquainted with the true religion. Genes. xii. 10—20. xx. 4. Cneph, was emblematically represented as the Creator of the universe: and Taautus, one of the first legislators of Egypt, expressly taught the doctrine of the unity.

All the religions of antiquity originated from theism. Herodotus gives a pleasing recital of the Persian worship. ‘ They
 ‘ make no images, nor build either altars or
 ‘ temples, charging those with folly, who
 ‘ do such things: because, as I conjecture,
 S 2 ‘ they

‘ they hold the gods to be altogether diffe-
‘ rent in nature from men, contrary to the
‘ opinion of the Grecians. When they go
‘ to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter, they ascend
‘ the highest parts of the mountains: and
‘ call the whole circle of the heavens by the
‘ name of Jupiter. They sacrifice to the sun
‘ and moon, to the earth, the fire, the wa-
‘ ter, and the winds. These are their *origi-*
‘ *nal* gods: but they *since* learnt from the
‘ Arabians and Assyrians, to sacrifice to Ve-
‘ nus Urania, who by the Arabians is called
‘ *Alitta*, by the Assyrians *Mylitta*, and by
‘ the Persians *Mithra*. When a Persian re-
‘ solves to sacrifice, he builds no altar, kin-
‘ dles no fire, makes no libation; nor uses
‘ either flutes, fillets, or consecrated flour:
‘ but, wearing a tiara garnished chiefly **with**
‘ myrtle on his head, leads the victim to a
‘ clean piece of ground, and invokes the god.
‘ He that offers, is not permitted to pray for
‘ himself alone; but, as he is a member of
‘ the nation, is obliged to pray for the prof-
‘ perity of all the Persians, and in particular
‘ for the King. When he has cut the vic-
‘ tim into small pieces, and boiled the flesh,
‘ he lays it on a bed of tender grass, espec-
‘ ally trefoil: and after all things are thus
‘ disposed, one of the magi standing up,
‘ sings an ode concerning the original of the
‘ gods;

‘ gods, which they say has the force of a
 ‘ charm; and without one of these, they are
 ‘ not permitted to sacrifice. After this, he
 ‘ that offered having continued a short time
 ‘ in the place, carries away and disposes of
 ‘ the flesh as he thinks fit.’

Such was the earliest polytheism, which, for a considerable time, retained many features of its heaven-descended parent, the primitive religion. Herodotus, in his second book, shews a contrast to this first and purest idolatry in the portentous corruptions of Ægypt: which having carried image-worship and its subsequent errors to a greater excess than any other nation, was therefore made the scene of those miracles, by which the God of Israel triumphed over idolatry in its strongest citadel.

From Ægypt let us turn to the other great division of Africa, the republic of Carthage, whose sanguinary and inexorable superstition was formed on that of its parent-state, the Phoenicians, ‘ who sacrificed their sons and
 ‘ their daughters to the idols of Canaan.’ Psalm. cvi. 36—39. The introducing a revelation of the doctrine of the unity into Ægypt and Phoenicia, and maintaining that doctrine in the midst of idolatrous corruptions, is always represented in scripture as an exploit of divine heroism, if I may so express
 it,

it, only to be exceeded by that conquest over the polytheism of the Roman empire, achieved by the same divine person, in the character of the Messiah.

The Grecian idolatry was first reduced to a system by the poet Hesiod. In his theogony, we may discern three kinds of traditions, on which was raised the whole fabric of the Greek religion. The first kind may well be termed sacred; being no other than the original revelation of the fall of the angels, the state of paradise, and the apostacy of man, veiled in those noble fictions, the war of the giants, the golden age, and subsequent depravity.

The second kind of traditions, preserved in Hesiod, may be termed historical; relating to those kings, legislators, and inventors of arts, who were deified by the credulity of the first Grecian colonies. Both are *finely* grouped by Milton.

Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue, held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than heaven and earth
 Their boasted parents: Titan, heaven's first-born,
 With his enormous brood, and birth-right seiz'd
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found.
 So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top

Of

Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest heaven : or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land ; or who with Saturn old
 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields
 And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

i. 508—521.

The third source of the Greek polytheism was their mythology ; partly formed on historic traditions, but chiefly on corrupted etymologies.

Most of the gods of Greece were deified men, to whom was assigned a local jurisdiction.

The council of Amphictyons presided over the Greek religion, and gave it all the strength and stability of a national establishment, by building temples, endowing them with lands, instituting a priesthood, and so combining religion with the state, as to make their union permanent and inseparable.

The interior of the religion of Greece was chiefly confined to the oracles and the mysteries. The former, I have no doubt, were political and sacerdotal impostures, which were a powerful state-engine, till they lost their credit, as the world improved in science and discernment. The mysteries, which have been so ably disclosed of late by their learned hierophant, seem principally to have aimed at
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the same object, as that of the Greek philosophy, the union of the soul of man with its parent-principle the soul of the universe. Philosophy taught this doctrine in the way of reason and discourse: the mysteries in the way of emblem and representation. Both enjoined the καθαρσις, or moral purification, and the ascent of the soul to God, as the means of union. Thus in the mysteries, the transition from the deepest gloom and darkness to a sudden splendour, was an emblem of the illumination of the mind. The horror of the previous spectacle expressed the remorse of conscious guilt. The succeeding serenity and transporting brightness, symbolized the peace and joy of the soul renewed to virtue and the divine life. Such was, perhaps, the intention of those legislators, who instituted the mysteries: but the morality of these mystic nocturnal representations was soon absorbed in the prodigious corruptions of those who superstitiously resorted to them. The political part of the Greek religion consisted in the adoration of great men, living and dead.

The learned translator of M. Mallet's northern antiquities, distributes the ancient pagan religions of Europe into five classes (introd. to vol. II.) 1st, the polytheism of Greece and Rome. 2d, The druidical religions of the Celtic nations, 3d, The polytheism

theism of the Teutonic and Gothic nations.
 4th, The paganism of the Sclavonian nations.
 5th, The low wretched superstitions of the more northern savages, the Laplanders, Finns, Greenlanders, &c. He observes that the first inhabitants of Gaul and Britain, being of *Celtic* race, followed the Druidical superstitions; while the ancient Germans, Scandinavians, &c. being of *Gothic* race, professed that system of polytheism afterwards delivered in the Edda. The present inhabitants of France and Britain derive their descent from the Franks and Saxons, and have innumerable reliques both of the Celtic and Gothic superstitions. Of both these, it will be proper to give some idea, from the writers of the Augustan age, who delineate the Celtic religion as it appeared at that period.

Whether the Greek and Roman polytheism, a polished and magnificent establishment; or the barbarous Gothic and Celtic superstitions, formed the greatest obstacle to the prevalence of the gospel; is a problem, which in either solution, demonstrates the divine efficacy of Christianity.

The Celtic religion is described by Julius Cæsar, in the sixth book of his commentaries. c. 15. A. U. DCCI. from whence I shall make some extracts, in order to shew from
 so

so great an authority the genius of the northern religions; and the power of an establishment, whose sanguinary superstitions were some ages afterwards transferred to the Papal hierarchy. ' The Druids preside in
 ' matters of religion, have the care of public
 ' and private sacrifices, and interpret the will
 ' of the gods. They have the direction and
 ' education of the youth; by whom they are
 ' held in great honour. In almost all controversies, whether public or private, the
 ' decision is left to them: and, if any crime
 ' is committed, any murder perpetrated; if
 ' any dispute arises, touching an inheritance,
 ' or the limits of adjoining estates; in all
 ' such cases, they are the supreme judges.
 ' They decree rewards and punishments; and
 ' if any one refuses to submit to their sentence, whether magistrate or private man,
 ' they *interdict him the sacrifices*. This is
 ' the greatest punishment that can be inflicted among the Gauls; because such as
 ' are under this prohibition, are considered
 ' as impious and wicked: all men shun them,
 ' and decline their conversation and fellowship, lest they should suffer from the contagion of their misfortunes; they can neither have recourse to the law for justice,
 ' nor are capable of any public office. The
 ' Druids are all under *one chief*, who possesses

‘ fesses the supreme authority in that body.
 ‘ Upon his death, if any one remarkably ex-
 ‘ cels the reſts, he ſucceeds; but if there
 ‘ are ſeveral candidates of equal merit, the
 ‘ affair is determined by plurality of ſuffra-
 ‘ ges: ſometimes they even have recourſe
 ‘ to arms, before the election can be decided.
 ‘ At a ſtated ſeaſon of the year, they aſſem-
 ‘ ble at a conſecrated place, in the territory
 ‘ of the Carnutes [Chartres] in the center of
 ‘ Gaul. Hither all who have controverſies
 ‘ to be determined repair, and abide by their
 ‘ decrees. The ſyſtem of druidiſm is ſup-
 ‘ poſed to have been invented in Britain, and
 ‘ from thence transferred to Gaul; and at
 ‘ this time, they who wiſh to learn it with
 ‘ accuracy, uſually go to Britain for instruc-
 ‘ tion. The Druids never go to war, are ex-
 ‘ empted from taxes and military ſervice,
 ‘ and enjoy all manner of immunities.—The
 ‘ whole nation of the Gauls is extremely ad-
 ‘ dicted to ſuperſtition; whence, in threat-
 ‘ ning diſtempers, and the imminent dangers
 ‘ of war, they make no ſcruple to ſacrifice
 ‘ men, or engage themſelves by vow to ſuch
 ‘ ſacrifices: in which they make uſe of the
 ‘ miniſtry of the Druids. For it is a prevail-
 ‘ ing opinion among them, that nothing but
 ‘ the life of man can atone for the life of
 ‘ man: inſomuch, that they have eſtabliſhed
 ‘ even

‘ even public sacrifices of this kind. Some
 ‘ prepare huge colossuses of osier twigs, into
 ‘ which they put men alive, and setting fire to
 ‘ them, those within expire amidst the flames.’

Cæsar’s description paints in strong colours the enormous power of the Celtic establishment, and its surprizing resemblance to the papal hierarchy; a resemblance naturally accounted for, by deriving the corruptions introduced into christianity by the northern conquerors of the Roman empire, from the religious opinions of Celtic origin, which they brought with them into Italy. The tyranny, superstition, and cruelty of the druidical establishment were transferred by the Gothic converts into their new religion; and became in process of time the domination, imposture, and spirit of persecution, which characterized the church of Rome.

Lucan, on Cæsar’s turning his arms from Gaul against his country, describes the barbaric superstitions, with the enthusiasm of a poet, happily emulated by Mr. Rowe, in his animated translation, i. 778,

And you, where Hesus’ horrid altar stands,
 Where dire Teutates human blood demands;
 Where Taranis by wretches is obey’d,
 And vies in slaughter with the Scythian maid;
 All see with joy the war’s departing rage,
 Seek distant lands, and other foes engage.

You

You too, ye bards, whom sacred raptures fire,
 To chaunt your heroes to your country's lyre;
 Who consecrate in your immortal strain
 Brave patriot souls in righteous battle slain;
 Securely now, the tuneful task review,
 And noblest themes in deathless songs renew.

The Druids now, while arms are heard no more,
 Old mysteries and barbarous rites restore:
 A tribe, who singular religion love,
 And haunt the lonely covert of the grove.

I omit the fine verses that follow on the Celtic doctrine of the immortality, as belonging to another subject: and add, that the foregoing authorities, which we shall confirm by others in their proper place, fix an obstacle in the way of christianity, apparently as insurmountable from the warlike superstitions of the north, as from the polite and magnificent establishments of Rome and Greece.

To shew at what time, and in what circumstances the christian religion prevailed over the united force of all these superstitions, is a most interesting province of ecclesiastical history. The spirit of Popery debased the northern conversions, and tarnished in a considerable degree, the genuine glories of the gospel.

As our chief concern in this disquisition is with the religion of ancient Rome: I think it not improper, to enquire by what degrees

grees the Roman religion was, from a state of admirable simplicity, corrupted by a complication of foreign deities and their various rites ; and in that state of depravation, established throughout that great republic and stupendous empire, with a power and policy, a strength, opulence, and splendour, which had every probable appearance of permanence and stability.

The founders of Rome were especially attentive to the establishment of religion : and to the religious character of the Roman people, their ancient panegyrists always ascribe the grandeur and extent of that victorious republic.

Romulus began that establishment, which Numa improved, and the last of their kings completed. Dionysius, who warps the Roman antiquities to his favourite system of their Grecian origin, gives an idea of the religion of Rome, better suited to its progressive aggrandizement, than to its simpler beginnings. But his testimony, and that of Plutarch, is of indisputable authority, as to the exterior of an establishment, of whose origin they were perhaps not apprized.

‘ Beginning with the worship, both of the
‘ gods and genii, and according to the most
‘ approved rites among the Greeks, Romu-
‘ lus appointed temples, consecrated places,
‘ altars,

‘ altars, the *erecting of images* the representa-
 ‘ tions and symbols of the gods, and declared
 ‘ their power, the beneficent presents they
 ‘ made to mankind, the particular holidays
 ‘ appropriated to each god or genius, the sa-
 ‘ crifices which are most acceptable to them,
 ‘ the festivals, public games, and days of rest:--
 ‘ and accustomed his people to speak and think
 ‘ of the gods with the greatest reverence, and
 ‘ to attribute no passions to them unbecom-
 ‘ ing their happy nature.’ Dionys. II. 18.
 He goes on to describe at large, the establish-
 ment by Romulus, to which the observation
 of Livy is generally applicable, ‘ *Religiones*
 ‘ *colebantur pié magis quam magnificé.*’

‘ Numa left untouched those rites which
 ‘ he found established by Romulus; but
 ‘ whatever he thought omitted by him, he
 ‘ added: consecrating many places to those
 ‘ gods, who had hitherto received no honours:
 ‘ erecting many altars and temples, and insti-
 ‘ tuting festivals in honour of each; appoint-
 ‘ ing priests to take care of those festivals;
 ‘ and enacting laws concerning purifications,
 ‘ ceremonies, and expiations; and many
 ‘ other rites and honours, in greater number
 ‘ than are to be found in any other city,
 ‘ either Greek or Barbarian. He also order-
 ‘ ed, that Romulus himself should be ho-
 ‘ noured under the name of Quirinus, with
 ‘ a temple

‘ a temple and annual sacrifices. Numa hav-
 ‘ ing reduced his whole system of religious
 ‘ laws into writing, divided them into eight
 ‘ parts. The first division of the holy rites,
 ‘ he assigned to the thirty Curiones; the se-
 ‘ cond, to the Flamines; the third, to the
 ‘ commanders of the Celeres; the fourth,
 ‘ to the Augurs; the fifth, to the Vestals;
 ‘ the sixth, to the Salii; the seventh, to the
 ‘ Feciales; the eighth, to those who are in-
 ‘ vested with the Chief-pontificate, the great-
 ‘ est power among the Romans. Affairs of
 ‘ the highest moment are subject to their ju-
 ‘ risdiction; they being the teachers, minis-
 ‘ ters, guardians, and interpreters of holy
 ‘ things. ’II. 63—73.

Our learned antiquary is perhaps mistaken,
 in asserting that both Romulus and Numa
 erected temples, and the former statues and
 images. Plutarch, himself a priest of A-
 pollo, gives a higher idea of the simpli-
 city of Numa's establishment. ‘ His or-
 ‘ dinances about images are very similar to
 ‘ the opinions of Pythagoras: who supposed,
 ‘ that the Supreme Being was not subject to
 ‘ sense, or capable of passion; but invisible,
 ‘ incorruptible, and to be comprehended
 ‘ only by the mind. Numa forbid the Ro-
 ‘ mans to represent God in the form of man or
 ‘ beast; nor was there any painted or graven
 ‘ image

‘ image of a deity admitted among them formerly: but for the space of the first four hundred and sixty years, they built temples and erected chapels, but made no statue or image; as thinking it a great impiety, to represent the most excellent Being by things so base and unworthy; there being no possible access to the deity, but by the mind, raised and elevated by divine contemplation.’

A writer of great merit, M. de Beaufort, in the first book of his *Republique Romaine*, has drawn a flattering picture of the Roman religion, in its original simplicity. His system is founded on that of M. Pelloutier, that all the northern tribes who peopled Europe, were Scythians, and that the Romans themselves were of Celtic origin. The Sabines, Tuscans, Latins, who first inhabited Rome and its little territory, were of Celtic descent and religion. The Celts excluded all sensible images of the deity: the Romans for CLXX years had no statues of the gods; and the greek idolatry was not introduced among them, till the 33d year of the reign of the first Tarquin.

M. de Beaufort, shews in several instances, a remarkable conformity between the original Roman and Celtic religions. Thus, the Roman Dis or Deus, was the Tis or Teut

T

of

of the Celts. A spear or sword was a symbol of the divinity among the warlike nations of the north and west. The first Romans sacrificed human victims, a barbarity which they had learned from their Celtic ancestors, and which Numa prohibited; pretending to have learned the will of the gods in his conferences with the nymph Egeria, who was no other, than the priestess of Diana in the forest of Aricia; a deity of Celtic origin, and honoured with Celtic rites. The vestal fire was an imitation of the Celtic fire-worship. All the Roman augury and divinations were of the like original, refined by the Etrurian discipline. With both Celts and Romans, hymns and the praises of heroes accompanied their feasts. The Salian dances were borrowed from the Curetes, who received that custom from the Thracian Celts.

This parallel, with the proofs annexed to it, is sufficiently exact and ingenious, to infer from it, that Numa established the Celtic religion, which he had imbibed among the Sabines; yet so tempered and qualified, as to second his exalted purpose, of humanizing his ferocious Romans. In this view, he not only abolished human victims, but all bloody sacrifices: substituting in their stead cakes of meal, salt, fruits, and libations of wine and milk.

milk. Such is the idea of Numa's establish-
 ment, given us by Tertullian. 'How ridi-
 culous is it,' says that animated apologist,
 to ascribe the Roman grandeur to the me-
 rits of the Roman religion? When the
 grandeur is *older* than the religion; or
 rather, the religion increased in proportion
 to the state. For though your superstitious
 curiosities had their first conception in Nu-
 ma's brain; yet during his reign, the Ro-
 man worship was without either statue or
 temple: their old religion was thrifty and
 plain, without any pompous rites, or ca-
 pitol vying with heaven: their altars were
 rude and hasty, and of turf only: their
 sacred vessels of Samian clay. From hence,
 the moderate steams of a slender sacrifice
 ascended; nor was the image of any god to
 be seen among them: for as yet, the Gre-
 cian and Tuscan artists had not overflowed
 the city with the invention of images.'

An incident related by Livy, in the
 DLXXIId year of Rome, confirms the idea
 of the simplicity of the first establishment
 and of its subsequent corruptions. Some la-
 bourers, digging the grounds of L. Petilius
 a notary, at the foot of the hill Janiculum,
 found two coffers eight feet long, sealed with
 lead, with greek and latin inscriptions, im-
 porting that one of the coffers contained the

body of Numa, and the other the books of that king. Petilius, opening the coffers, found that which had contained the body quite empty; in the other, were two packets, each containing seven books, not only entire, but fresh and well preserved. Seven of the books were written in latin, and were a code of pontifical laws. The other seven in greek, contained a system of the philosophy of that remote age. These books were read by the friends of Petilius, and among others, by Q. Petilius the prætor of Rome, who had borrowed them of his kinsman and client Lucius. The prætor, having perused them, discerned that the principles of these writings were in most respects adverse to the present established religion. He advised his kinsman to destroy them; and deposed before the senate, that the books ought not to be either read or preserved. The senate decreed, that, on the prætor's representation, the books of Numa should be publickly burned in the comitium, in a fire made by the victimaries.

Without undertaking to defend the authenticity of those writings ascribed to Numa; the pretence for destroying them suggests, that since the death of that king, the Roman religion had undergone so great a change, that it was not safe to compare it
with

with the original establishment. The ancient Romans, says Valerius Maximus reciting this discovery, would not permit these writings to be preserved, as they had a tendency to draw men from the worship of the gods, and to dissolve the religion of the state.

The regal establishment was completed by the last of the kings, Tarquin the proud, who finished the capitol a little before his expulsion, though that august edifice was not dedicated till the third consulate. The ancients deemed it essential to a religious establishment, to have some splendid and impregnable structure, as the principal seat of its worship. Numa had before erected a capitol of inferior note, suitable to the simplicity of his system. But the very memory of it was almost obliterated by that superb structure, which, begun by the first Tarquin, was carried on by the emulation of the succeeding kings, and was the only part of Rome that escaped the fury of the Gallic invasion in CCCLXIII. The first capitol, which was built by Tarquin, and dedicated by Horatius, was burnt down in the civil war of Sylla and Marius. The second, Sylla built, and dying before the dedication, left that honour to Catulus. This was demolished in the Vitellian sedition; and Vespasian began a third, which was finished by him,

him, but not dedicated; being burnt soon after his death. A fourth was built and dedicated by Domitian, the very gilding of which cost 12,000 talents. This superb structure, which seemed to form an impregnable defence of paganism, shared the fate of that establishment. In the reign of Commodus, it was struck by lightning; Stilicho, under Honorius, plundered it of its wealth and ornaments; Genferic, king of the Vandals, continued the devastation; Totilas destroyed a great part of it by fire; Theodoric, the most illustrious of the barbarous kings, in vain attempted to restore Rome and the capitol to their former splendour; and it fell into decay and total neglect, together with the pagan establishment, by the gradual prevalence of the Christian religion.

The first Tarquin, when he founded the capitol, intended by this edifice to introduce and establish the greek idolatry: he accordingly consecrated it to the greek divinities, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Yet a well-known circumstance has preserved the tradition of a religious system, prior to that of the regal establishment. The Capitoline mount had temples consecrated to several deities, who, by consent of their priests, gave up their domains to the new structure. Only Terminus would not yield his place. The Celtic

Celtic emblem of the Supreme Being, was a rock or rude stone: and the most common and universal of the Celtic antiquities, are huge masses of stone, sometimes standing single, sometimes moveable or rocking, and sometimes formed into stupendous concentric circles. A rude stone was the symbol of the deity, that occupied the summit of the Tarpeian mount, when Tarquin founded the new temple. Such was the veneration of the Romans for this essential part of their ancient religion, that it still kept its place; and continued to be worshipped, as long as paganism subsisted, under the appellation of Jupiter Lapis.

The Roman deities may be distributed into three distinct classes. The first includes the ancient Celtic or Sabine gods, prior to the reign of Tarquin I. namely, Vesta, Terminus, Confus, Semo Sancus, Janus, Quirinus. Next, the grecian gods; *majorum gentium*, or the XII Consentes; and *minorum gentium*, consisting of innumerable subaltern deities, heroes, demigods, who readily admitted into their fraternity, those who were newly canonized. Thirdly, the Roman state divinized the virtues and passions of the human mind: imaginary deities, adapted to impress the people with veneration for their religion and government; and to inure them

them to excel in those civil and military qualities, which constituted the Roman patriotism.

In this outline, I have for the most part followed the judicious system of M. de Beaufort, which seems liable to no other exception, than that his idea of the Roman religion before Tarquin I. seems too much simplified. His reasoning is not sufficiently supported by facts, to evince, that the early Romans had not a mixture of domestic and foreign rites, blended with their Celtic traditions. This incorporation of different superstitions, is at once agreeable to the social principle of the ancient religions, and to the views and prejudices of Tarquin; who, descended of greek ancestors, himself a native of Tuscany, added both kinds of foreign superstitions to the Celtic or primitive religion of Rome. Hence, the Tuscan ritual was established by authority, and was uniformly in vogue, during the whole period of the republic. The prejudice of education was powerfully turned to the support of the public superstition: the Roman youth were taught the Tuscan language and discipline; which was committed to writing in their fulgural, augural, and other books: in which the priests were sure to find such interpretations of thunders, auguries, aruspices, and other

other merely natural phænomena, as best suited the political purpose, of enacting laws, electing magistrates, marching armies, and fighting battles.

The leading principle of the religion of the republic, was to strengthen the authority of the Senate, of the Patrician order, and of the great Officers of state. This, which is the true key to the religious institutions, is at the same time a convincing proof of the power and influence of the establishment. It was a political system, well adapted to the genius of the people: it was not only protected, but administered in many instances, by the civil magistrate: it grew with the growth of the republic, and seemed to promise itself a duration, equal to that of the imperial and eternal city.

The beginning of the fourth century of Rome, was distinguished by laying the foundation of her jurisprudence in the XII tables of the decemviral laws, in part collected from those of Solon and the greek democracies. Dionysius had annexed to his excellent history of the decemvirate, several observations on that code, which are unfortunately lost. By a fragment of those observations, xi. 44, it appears, that he held these laws in great esteem, as far superiour to their grecian models. The panegyrics of Cicero, Livy, Gellius,

lius, and others, give high ideas of this system of jurisprudence, which in III parts regulated public and private rights, and established the national religion.

There was a collection of Roman jurisprudence, prior to the decemviral, called the Papirian code. It contained the regal constitutions, digested by the command of Ancus Marcius, in the 35th Olympiad. ‘ This
 ‘ king, finding many of the religious ceremonies instituted by Numa fallen into neglect, exhorted them to return to the worship of the gods, as practised by them in Numa’s reign. He advised them to restore the system of government introduced by Numa, as full of greatness and moderation; by applying themselves to agriculture and the arts of peace. After this, he sent for the pontifs, and receiving from them the collections of religious rites, which Pompius had composed, he caused to be written on boards, and exposed in the forum, to be considered by every one. These have since been destroyed by time. For brazen pillars being not yet in use, the laws and religious institutions were then ingraved on oaken boards. But, after the expulsion of the kings, they were again written out for the use of the public, by Caius Papirius, a
 ‘ pontif,

‘pontif, who had the superintendence of all
 ‘matters relating to divine worship.’ Dionys.
 iii. 37.

The XII tables were compiled from the Papirian and Athenian codes. Cicero, who expresses so high an opinion of them, gives the substance of the religious institutions (from the Xth table, de Jure Sacro) in his books of laws, but interpolated and refined by his own exquisite genius, emulous of excelling Plato in those great works of laws and a republic, which I suppose were the most perfect productions of Cicero.

Cicero, in the manner of the most ancient legislators, prefaced his system of laws with a proëm so beautiful, that it merits a place in these collections: at the same time, it confirms the idea I have before expressed of Cicero’s theism, and leaves no room to doubt of his real religious principles. ‘The true
 ‘and original law,’ says this sublime philosopher, ‘authorized to command and to forbid, is the right reason of the supreme Jupiter.’ And in his proëm: ‘In the first
 ‘place, let subjects be firm in their belief,
 ‘that all things are governed by the gods,
 ‘by their absolute sovereignty and beneficent
 ‘providence: that they inspect the hearts of
 ‘their worshippers, and know their good and
 ‘ill actions, with what intentions they perform

‘ form religious duties ; and make a distinction between the impious and the good. Such a principle leads to the most USEFUL of all truths : for who can be so absurdly arrogant, as to be conscious of a mind and reason in himself, and not to admit a mind and reason in heaven and the universe : or to suppose the world is not directed by reason, when it requires the highest effort of reason to comprehend its nature. He indeed is scarce worthy the name of a man, whom the system of the planets, the vicissitudes of day and night, the temperature of the seasons, and the productions of nature, do not lead to a religious gratitude. As all things endued with reason excel the irrational ; and it is impious to assert, that aught excels the universal nature : reason must of necessity be inseparable from NATURE. The utility of such principles is evident, if we reflect, on the sanction of oaths, the faith of treaties, the force of religious fear to deter men from crimes, by the dread of divine vengeance, and lastly, the sanctity of civil society, wherein the immortal gods interpose as judges and as witnesses.’

Such is the proëm to the laws, in the manner of Plato and the ancient legislators.

Then

Then follow the laws themselves, as they respect religion.

“Let the gods be worshipped with a pure mind, without external pomp or opulence. Let those who approach them with ill intentions, dread their vengeance. Let none have a separate worship, or new and foreign gods, except such as are adopted by public authority. In the cities, let the ancient temples be frequented; in the country, the sacred groves, and chapels of the lares. Let the rites of families, and those of our ancestors, be duly observed. Honour those gods, who were always held to be cœlestial: and those also whom their merits have placed in heaven, Hercules, Liber, Esculapius, Castor, Pollux, Quirinus. Let there be chapels to those laudable qualities, by which mortals aspire to heaven, such as Reason, Virtue, Piety, Good Faith: but let no vice be ever consecrated, or honoured with religious rites. On festivals, let all contentions cease: let the slaves partake of them, when their labours are done. Let a calendar be made of them in their annual course. On some days, and at some sacrifices, let the priests offer certain fruits and berries; for other sacred seasons, let them keep a sufficient plenty of milk and young animals. To prevent any neglect, let the priests regulate the course of
the

the year, so as to provide such victims as are most agreeable to each of the deities. Let priests be appointed for some deities, pontiffs for all without exception, and flamens for some in particular."

"In Rome, let the vestal virgins guard the sacred and eternal fire of the public hearth."

"Let the ignorant learn of the priests, in what manner and with what rites both public and private sacrifices are to be offered."

"Of the priests let there be two classes: one, to preside over the ceremonies and sacrifices; the other, to interpret the unknown oracles of diviners and prophets, when the senate and people order it. Let the public augurs, interpreters of Jupiter the best and greatest, afterwards consult the presages and auspices, conformably to their discipline. Let the priests augur fertility to the vineyards and plantations, and prosperity to the Roman people."

"Let the auspices precede all deliberations on affairs of war and peace; and let the auspices be obeyed. Let lightnings be interpreted according to the region of the air from whence they proceed. Let the augurs have free scope for their observations, in the city, the fields, and open air; and let them proceed according to their ritual. Whatever the augur shall declare to be unjust or inauspicious,

spicious, ill-boding or defective, let it be undone and of no effect. Whoso refuses to comply with the auguries, let him incur the sentence of death."

Let the *feciales* decide in matters of truce or treaty, of embassy, war, and peace. Let the *Hetrurians* and *Aruspices*, by the authority of the senate, interpret all portents and prodigies; and let the principal *Hetrurian* augurs teach their discipline. Let them propitiate those gods, from whom they derive their science. Let them expiate lightnings and their effects."

"Let no nocturnal sacrifices be celebrated by women; except those which are offered by authority, for the people. Nor let any one be initiated, unless in the accustomed mysteries of *Ceres* of grecian origin."

"Such crimes as are inexpiable, let them be deemed impieties: such as are expiable, let them be expiated by the public priests."

In public spectacles, such as are celebrated without chariots or athletic exercises, let the popular festivity in music and song be moderated, and let those rejoicings be connected with the honour of the gods. Let the best of our native rites be held in reverence and use. Let none, except the priests of the *idæan* mother, go about collecting oblations, and they, only on certain fixed days. Whoso
steals

steals or takes by force any thing sacred, or any thing deposited in a sacred place; let the sacrilege be deemed as great an offence as parricide. The divine punishment of perjury, is the destruction of the perjured; let disgrace and infamy be his punishment from man. Let the pontiffs punish incest capitally. Let not an impious person dare to propitiate the gods with gifts. Let vows be sacredly performed. Let the violation of religion meet with condign punishment. Let no one consecrate his lands in mortmain; and let there be due limits in the consecration of gold, silver, ivory. Let private sacrifices be perpetual. Let the honours of the Dii Manes be inviolable. Let the souls of the dead be reckoned divine. Let the expence of funeral honours and mourning be retrenched and regulated by law."

Such was the establishment of the religion of the Republic, by the constitutions of Numa, the laws of the XII tables, and the usage of the Roman people. Yet paganism undoubtedly appears in this philosophic code, as illustrated by Cicero's comment, in a purer and more sober form, than it did in actual celebration. From the whole scope of these laws, it is evident, that the Roman idolatry was a state-engine, actuating a superstitious people to second the ambition of their senate, consuls,

Consuls, and Generals of armies : and was well-adapted to the first principle of their policy, the spirit of Conquest.

The Celtic, Greek, and Tuscan superstitions, thus combined in one establishment ; the Roman Religion made a progress in error and authority, commensurate with the growth and grandeur of the Republic. During the whole period of the Consular government, for near five hundred years, the attachment to religion was the ruling passion of the Roman people : it even took the lead of and influenced their patriotism. The Divine Providence directed their ruling passion to its own august purpose, of giving empire to the bravest and most virtuous of the pagan nations ; in order to give that empire and the world itself a pure and divine Religion.

The XII tables had forbid the introduction of new divinities and foreign rites ; and for two centuries, the decemviral Laws kept up this salutary restraint. Afterwards, the general principle of the religion of Rome was the same as that of her policy ; she incorporated foreign rites and deities with her own, in the same manner as she inrolled the conquered nations in the number of her subjects and citizens. She was indeed neither hasty nor uniform in adopting foreign religions : and it was a relaxation of her morals

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and piety, which opened the sluices to that inundation of polytheism, which in the progress of her empire made her the common receptacle of all the impostures and superstitions of the provinces. The dangerous effects of this promiscuous intercourse she often experienced to her cost. The Senate often interfered, to prohibit this corruption of the established Religion. In the sixth century, A. U. 534. the Consul L. Æmilius Paullus with his own hands demolished the fanes of Isis and Serapis; and in 567, the Bacchanals were expelled from the city, and their rites abolished, by a decree of the Senate which is still extant. To these instances, Valerius Maximus, l. 3. adds the abolition of the worship of Jupiter Sabazius, an eastern appellation transferred from the Jewish scriptures to the gentile worship of the Sun. Yet notwithstanding repeated prohibitions, we find the Egyptian and Asiatic rites continually practised at Rome, till all religions were made her denizens.

Innumeros post deinde deos, virtute subactis

Urbibus, et claris peperit sibi Roma triumphis.

Inter fumantes templorum armata ruinas

Dextera victoris simulacra hostilia cepit —

Roma, triumphantis quoties ducis inclyta currum

Plausibus excepit, toties altaria divum

Addidit, et spoliis sibimet nova numina fecit.

antiqui sunt vestigia moris

Gressibus

Gressibus incertis varie titubasse probentur,
 Adsciscendo deos majoribus incompetos;
 Seque peregrina sub religione dicasse,
 Nec ritus servasse suos? quodcunque sacrorum est
 Exfulat, externumque inimicam venit in urbem.

PRUDENTIUS, contr. Symm. ii. 356.

To enter into a particular detail of the accumulated Religion of the Republic, from the period of her adopting foreign rites, would be a work of immense discussion. Instead of an attempt so disproportioned to my ability and my resources, I shall fill up this interval with such observations, as have occurred to me on the genius of the ancient idolatry as well in Greece as in the Roman Republic, in which all Greece, and the nearer parts of Asia were now included. This part will relate to the Priesthood, Endowments, Temples, Sacrifices, Statues, Pictures, and the Arts in general, which were subservient to the reigning polytheism. The result of such a view of that splendid and voluptuary Religion will lead us, to be astonished at its splendour and magnificence; to acknowledge its turpitude and flagitious nature; to discern its prodigious influence over the people; to perceive the necessity of a better system of religion; and to confess that omnipotence, which could destroy the whole fabric of polytheism by the divinity of the

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

Archbishop POTTER's account of the Religion of Greece, in the second book of his antiquities is worthy of a diligent perusal, as is indeed the whole of that learned and accurate work. In the second chapter, His Grace observes, that as most of the gods were men consecrated upon the account of some public benefits, conferred on mankind; so most of the heathen temples are thought to have been at first only stately monuments erected in honour of the dead. Thus Virgil styles the temple of Ceres

—Tumulum antiquæ Cereris; sedemque sacratam.

Æneid. II. 742.

Temples were built and adorned with all possible splendour and magnificence. Sometimes, the same temple was dedicated to several gods, who were thence termed *συνναοί*. They were built after that manner, which was thought most agreeable to the gods: almost every god had a form of building peculiar to himself, and which was deemed more acceptable to him than any other. The Doric pillars were sacred to Jupiter, Mars, and Hercules; the Ionic to Bacchus, Apollo, and Diana; the Corinthian, to Vesta. It was customary to dedicate the temples in places most agreeable to the temper of the deities,

deities; in situations free from noise and hurry, on the banks of rivers, or in a fine aspect to the public ways, or in the principal streets and squares of cities. They were divided into two parts, the sacred and profane: The *περίρραντήριον* or holy-water was placed between them; but sometimes at the door of the temple, sometimes at the entrance of the adytum. Athens was so superbly built, that it was one continued ornament. Abp. Potter, I. 8, specifies the principal temples: that of Minerva the victorious, of white marble. The Parthenon, in the citadel, one hundred feet broad, two hundred and eighteen feet long, of admirable white marble: this superb antiquity is of the plain Doric without pedestals, built by Ictinus under Pericles: but I think its beauty is far exceeded by the Erechtheion, or temple of Erechtheus; and its magnificence by that of the Olympian Jupiter; of both which, bishop Pococke has given accurate views and descriptions.

The prodigious magnificence of the ancient temples exceeds all our modern conceptions. The capitol at Rome was at once an assemblage of sacred buildings, and by its works and situation, an impregnable fortress. In the *Notitia Imperii*, four hundred and twenty-four temples are mentioned in Rome only.

Diodorus

Diodorus gives remarkable accounts of the temples in his native island of Sicily: that of the *Μετῆρες* at Engyon; that of Venus on M. Eryx; and especially, that of Jupiter Olympius at Agrigentum, the largest in Europe. Libanius, in his oration for the temples addressed to Theodosius the great, describes the ruins of a temple on the frontiers of Persia, in compass equal to a city; and so strong, that its fortifications bid defiance to the attacks of an enemy.

Pausanias, who flourished under Hadrian and the Antonines, in his description of Greece, is minute and copious on the subject of temples, statues, and the whole apparatus of paganism. The obvious reflections that result from his collections of that kind, are well expressed by his learned translator, the Abbé Gedoyne. ‘ The most enlightened
 ‘ people in the world, the so much boasted
 ‘ Greeks, even their sages and philosophers,
 ‘ had the most pitiable ideas of the deity,
 ‘ adored the work of their own hands, and
 ‘ paid divine honours to men, to whom they
 ‘ had themselves given an apotheosis. Man,
 ‘ therefore, is incapable of thinking as he
 ‘ ought of the supreme Being; he, therefore,
 ‘ stands in need of a divine revelation. True
 ‘ religion is the gift of God: and the christian
 ‘ religion alone is true, since that alone
 ‘ is

‘ is revealed, and that alone gives noble and
 ‘ just ideas of the deity.’

The pagan temples were not only places of sacrifice and prostration before the statues of the gods; but also served for many other purposes, of so great importance in civil life, as to give the gentile establishment in this respect a strength and stability, resulting from its alliance with the state, unknown to our times. In particular, the most celebrated temples were banks and treasuries, for the security of the public credit and private property, as well as for the custody of religious donations. They abounded in coined money, bullion, and jewels; as well as in gifts of all kinds, which constitute that treasure of antiquities so carefully collected in modern cabinets.

The *ἄρχαιον* in the Greek temples, was a treasury, both for sacred uses, and for private property.

Herodotus gives ample accounts of the treasures laid up at Delphi; and the history of this single temple would furnish a convincing argument, that it required more than human means to subvert the ancient and opulent superstitions of Greece and Asia. The isle of Cyprus was the Loretto of antiquity; and the shrine of Venus the richest in the world. The virtuous Cato was employed by

by the artifice of Clodius, in confiscating the Cyprian treasures; and the plundered monarch, by way of compensation, was offered the high priesthood of Paphos. That of Pessinus in Galatia was not inferior in dignity or revenues; and was sold by Clodius, together with the title of king, for an enormous sum, to the worthless son-in-law of Deiotarus.

Lucan describes with his usual spirit, the sacrilege of Cæsar, in breaking open the temple of Saturn, and seizing the public treasure, which had been there accumulated for many ages.

The tribune with unwilling steps withdrew,
While impious hands the rude assault renew :
The brazen gates with thund'ring strokes resound,
And the Tarpeian mountain rings around.
At length the sacred storehouse open laid
The hoarded wealth of ages past display'd :
The hundred Cretan cities ample spoil ;
What Cato gather'd from the Cyprian isle ;
Riches of captive kings by Pompey born
From utmost India and the rising morn ;
Wealth infinite —————

III. 236.

It is to be regretted as a defect in the science of antiquities, that we have not particular accounts of the endowments of the gentile priesthood. We know, in general, that a landed property was consecrated to maintain

tain the temples. The temples of Greece were endowed with lands called *τεμενῆ*. The XII tables forbid the private donation of lands in mortmain, on political reasons, to prevent the excess of superstitious munificence. Numa assigned a fund, which was augmented by Augustus, for the maintenance of the Vestals, and another for the expence of victims. The revenues of the priesthood were probably supplied from established funds. The principal priests had a numerous suite of secretaries and assistants. The priesthood had no exemption from the public taxes; which could not have been exacted, as they were with rigour, had not their revenues been considerable and even invidious.

But this is apparent from the rank and dignity of the priesthood. There is no occasion to enter into a detail of the dignity of the priesthood, among all nations polished or barbarous. Every one knows, that the regal and sacerdotal offices were often united. But the civil establishment of gentilism derived so much strength from its priesthood, that it is worth the while to enumerate its principal classes, especially in the Greek and Roman polytheism. In general, the persons of the priesthood were sacred, their manners and exterior were required

quired to be blameless, they were of both sexes, very numerous, and held their offices either by election or inheritance. High-priests presided over the different classes: especially in Greece, where, besides the priests of each particular deity, Abp. Potter II. 3. enumerates, The Parasiti, who took their name from their office of collecting the revenue of corn for public sacrifices: the Heralds, *κρυπτεες*, who had the same office as the latin *popæ* and victimaries, that of killing the victims: the Neocori, who, like the Roman *ædiles*, kept the Temples in repair, adorned and furnished them.

The Roman and Barbaric priesthood was still more dignified than that of Greece. Among the Romans, the priesthood was annexed to the noblest and most ancient families: and, which is peculiar to that state, was more conversant with Civil and Military than with Religious functions. The latter were performed in Rome by the xxx *Curiones*, a kind of parish-priests of the xxx wards of Rome; assisted by the *sacrificuli* and other officers. No person was admitted to the priesthood, who had any corporal blemish: yet no regard was had, either to the age or morals of the priests. Julius Cæsar at seventeen years of age was made *flamen dialis*. As the whole Religion of Rome was subservient

servient to her policy and aggrandizement; the high rank and titles of Pontiffs, Augurs, Flamens, were conferred on Senators, Consulars, and Generals of armies.

The Victims employed in the ancient Religions were a prodigious article of commerce; and interested the lucrative views of men of different occupations in support of the Establishment. Lands were annexed to the Temples to furnish them with victims. The first kings of Rome were possessed of demains, consisting of very fertile lands of large extent, the revenues of which supplied them with victims for the sacrifices. In the vow of the *ver sacrum*, the Roman people engaged themselves to sacrifice to Jupiter all the young animals that should be yeaned from the first of March to the last of April. In this respect the Christian Religion, which abolished sacrifices, was highly unpopular both among Jews and Pagans. Josephus assures, us that 256,000 victims were offered and feasted upon, at one passover. And Pliny gives this as one of the chief reasons of the Bithynian persecution; which he hoped had the desired effect; as the almost deserted temples began again to be frequented, and victims were every where exposed to sale, which of late could scarce find purchasers. St. Jerome considers

considers Christ's ridding the Temple of this gainful traffic as one of his greatest miracles: a miracle, which he was obliged to repeat three several times, so rooted was this inveterate abuse.

The Statues of the gods were of exquisite sculpture, and of high value, being often made of the precious metals, of the weight of an hundred pounds or more; sometimes they were colossal, of prodigious magnitude. It was sacrilege to move them from their bases. Even those of the deities were frequently obscene and indecent. Aristotle, while he gives excellent cautions against the corruption of the manners of youth by immodest pictures or statues, excepts the statues of the gods, as hallowed by custom.

Socrates dignified the art of Sculpture by his statues of Mercury propylæus, and of the Graces; but he marked the delicacy of his taste, by representing them clothed.

The prodigious number of images may be collected from several hints of ancient writers. Polybius tells us, that Philip's army destroyed 2000 statues in Ætolia. And he interrupts his narrative of the Achæan war, to speak as a connoisseur of an exquisite statue of Minerva at Aliphera. He makes very judicious reflections on the excesses

es of Philip, after the taking of Thermum, in destroying the Ætolian Temples: reflections, by the way, which acquit this excellent historian of the charge of impiety.

The works of the great Artists were no less revered, than the gods they represented. The Greeks especially were a nation of connoisseurs: both Judaism and Christianity must have been extremely unpalatable to their polished luxury; as striking without mercy at their passion for the fine arts.

Tertullian's treatise of idolatry is an invective against the art of sculpture, which was exercised even in the third century by many Christians, and even Ecclesiastics. He argues against the lawfulness of a christian artist being employed in making Statues of the gentile divinities. Those who had exercised this art before their conversion, alleged that they had no other way of gaining a livelihood. Tertullian exclaims against this abuse, and exhorts Christians to apply themselves to useful and innocent arts. How would this zealous father have been scandalized at the image-worship of papal Rome!

Having seen so much of the grand exterior of paganism, under the Commonwealth: before we proceed to trace the progress and perfection

perfection of the Establishment, under Augustus and his successors; let us, my Friend, look into the Temples, and, with S. Paul, 'observe their devotions.' These we shall find animated with all the fervour of genuine superstition. The pagan worship consisted in the consecration of Temples—in Adoration, or kissing the hand to the Statues—in embracing their knees and placing written prayers on them, and falling prostrate before them—in creeping up the steps of the Temples (Cæsar crept thus on his hands and feet up the hundred steps of the Capitol,) — in Supplications, or public thanksgivings — in Festivals usually attended with magnificent Spectacles — rarely, in public Fasts — in Sacrifices, sometimes of human Victims—and lastly, in public and private Prayers. Each of these would admit of much detail, and I have collected several particulars of each. Of their devotions, or the sentimental part of paganism, we have memorable traits in the writings of the best philosophers. Plato has a fine dialogue on this subject, the *Ild Alcibiades*, and he always speaks well upon it; as do the other writers of the Socratic school. Cicero in a curious passage expresses the general sense of antiquity on this point. Persius and Juvenal

Juvenal have treated this subject with all the precision and good sense of philosophy. From all we may collect, that the ordinary subject of the pagan prayers was external prosperity, or what are called the goods of fortune; together with the surprizing folly, of asking success and concealment to their crimes. Tully's testimony is decisive for the first of these positions; and the satyrists admirably expose the second. Yet a learned person brings many arguments, in proof that the ancients prayed for moral virtues, and understood or admitted the doctrine of divine assistance. I am of opinion, that Philosophy improved on the ideas of the vulgar in this instance; but that the true idea of prayer was adopted from the Christian Revelation; after which the devotions of the wiser pagans became more rational and exalted.

The ADORATION of Princes originated in the East, and was an effect of the Asiatic despotism. In the book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar enjoins the worship of his golden colossal Statue: and nothing less than a miracle in behalf of the magnanimous jewish captives could bring the monarch to reason. Daniel himself was exposed to the Lions for offering any prayer, except to the king of Persia.

Persia. Alexander transferred this impious folly from Persia to Greece; one of whose citizens though in exile scrupled to adore the majesty of Artaxerxes. How vainly the conqueror of Asia arrogated divine honours to himself, we know from the curious and interesting story of the virtuous Callisthenes. Diodorus gives a recital of the funeral honours and apotheosis of Hephæstion.

Heroism was a kind of deification. Brachidas the Spartan general, who was slain near Amphipolis, had a funeral with military honours: the Amphipolitans made an inclosure round his tomb, paid him heroic honours, instituted games and annual sacrifices, and adored him as the founder and protector of their colony.

The arrogant successors of Alexander, both in Syria and in Egypt, assumed the same honours. Several of the Seleucidæ were styled Saviours, Benefactors, gods; and divine attributes were liberally bestowed on the Kings of Parthia.

So transported were the Athenians with a wild and extravagant gratitude, that they bestowed upon Antigonus and Demetrius, not only the title of kings, but of tutelar deities and deliverers; and the envoys to those princes, were styled the ambassadors of the gods.

The

The Asiatics flattered every power that had them in subjection with the honours of the entheosis, or living deification. They decreed it to Mithridates, when stained with the massacre of the Roman citizens; and styled him a god, a second Bacchus, the preserver of Asia.

During the subsistence, and in the most flourishing state of the republic, a new species of deification arose, singular enough to merit some illustration in this place, as it interested all the Great and those in public characters, in the support of the established religion: I mean, the proconsular apotheosis. The conquered provinces carried their adulation to such an highth, as to erect altars and temples, and celebrate festivals, in honour of their proconsuls, whom they associated in the religious worship paid to the gods of the republic. This extravagance was unknown, till after the Romans had extended their conquests beyond Italy: the first example of it occurs in the divine honours paid by the Syracusans to Marcellus, as an expression of gratitude for his generosity in protecting their opulent city from the plunder and excesses of his victorious army. The anniversary festival instituted on this occasion, A. U. DXLII. was called the Marcellea; and was continued

down to the age of Cicero, who compares it to the festivals of the gods.

The cities of Asia Minor celebrated a like festival in honour of Q. Mucius Scævola the high priest, who governed that province in the year of Rome DCLIV, with such equity, moderation, and disinterestedness, that a festival called the Mutia was decreed to him with divine honours.

That province paid the same honours to Lucullus, who freed it from the exactions of the publicans and usurers. Sylla had demanded 20,000 talents from the Asiatics: and in Lucullus's time, the interest of that arbitrary impost amounted to 120,000 talents. To compliment their benefactor, they made him a god, and decreed him the Lucullæa, A. U. DCLXXX. These festivals were not civil but religious honours, and were respected as such, even by Mithridates himself, when he massacred all the Roman citizens resident in Asia.

Flaminius who conquered Philip king of Macedon, and restored the liberty of the Greek states, for these achievements, and for a special act of generosity to the city of Chalcis in Ætolia, had a religious festival, a priest, and sacrifices, with hymns in honour of him, continued to the time of Plutarch; who has recorded

recorded the poean and inscriptions, wherein the Chalcidians associated Flamininus with Hercules and Apollo, dedicated to them jointly their two principal public edifices, and even gave the hero of Rome the precedence above the gods of Greece, by placing his name first in the inscriptions. "Even to our time, says Plutarch, there is a priest of Titus formally elected, they sacrifice to him as to a god, and when the libations are over, they sing a poean made on purpose for the occasion."

The provinces soon proceeded to build temples to the proconsuls. Cicero acquaints us with this piece of adulation, which he had the good sense and virtue to reject, repeatedly; when it was offered to him by the Asiatics on the suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy, and by the Cilicians for his exemplary administration of their government.

Every circumstance concurred to perpetuate this impious flattery, as a part of the established religion. The temples erected by the provinces to their proconsuls, were public monuments of their subjection to the Roman government. The rapacity of the governors encouraged the practice, in order to appropriate to their own use, a part of

the money levied on the provinces, for building and endowing temples.

The infamous Verres had his Verrea at Syracuse, with a fund established for several years, to defray the expence of sacrifices.

The Asiatics flattered every power that had them in subjection, with this absurd deification. They decreed it to Mithridates, and styled him a god, and by a remarkable antiphrasis, the preserver of Asia. Pompey, after he had delivered the republic from this formidable enemy, and extended her limits as far as to the Euphrates, had the same divine honours paid to him: as appears from the inscription on his humble tomb in Egypt, so unequal to his former glory.

ΤΩΙ ΝΑΟΙΣ ΕΡΙΘΟΝΤΙ ΠΟΛΗ ΣΠΑΝΙΣ ΕΠΑΕΤΟ ΤΥΜΒΟΤ.

How scant a tomb for him whom temples grac'd!

We may add to these collections some examples from the Jewish history, which shew the wisdom and efficacy of revealed religion in checking this enormity. Every one knows the magnanimity of Herod the Great, on the defeat of Antony his friend and patron. The friendship that subsisted between them, he nobly avowed in the presence of Augustus,

tus, who generously confirmed him in his dominions. Herod expressed his gratitude in the true pagan style. In the twenty-first year of his reign, on being honoured with a visit from Augustus, he erected and dedicated to that emperor, a most beautiful temple of the whitest stone near Panium.

“Over against the mouth of the harbour of Cæsarea, says Josephus, upon an elevation there was a temple for Cæsar, excellent both in beauty and largeness. Within, was a colossus of Augustus, not less than that of Jupiter Olympius, which it was made to resemble. The other colossus, of Rome, was equal to that of Juno at Argos.” The two statues of Rome and Cæsar, were in perfect conformity to the court-mode of flattering Augustus in the provinces.

Herod's religion was in the genuine spirit of pagan intercommunity. The prince who built temples to Rome and Augustus, and revived the Olympic games at Cæsarea, also built a temple to the Supreme God, as we shall observe in another place: and by giving strength and splendour both to the gentile and jewish establishment even in Palestine, seemed to lay an invincible obstacle in the way of Christianity, which he had in vain attempted to extirpate in its cradle.

Herod

Pontius Pilate, who was procurator of Judæa a little before the commencement of Christ's public ministry, dedicated certain gilt shields in Herod's palace in honour of Tiberius; who at the earnest instance of the Jews commanded them to be taken down. Thus Philo. p. 1043, but Josephus, xviii. 3. with more accuracy tells us, that the shields were accompanied with a statue of the emperor, set up as an object of divine honours. To the shields the Jews had no scruple: it was an ancient and accustomed ornament of the august temple of Solomon, which was decorated with military spoils and trophies. It was the statue that alarmed their zeal for the divine unity, and they were ready to suffer martyrdom, rather than to permit this profanation. Perhaps the shields had busts of the emperor expressed upon them in relief, as was then the usage.

Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod and Mariamne, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his tribunal and made an oration to the Tyrian ambassadors. And the people, (Pagan attendants on the embassy) gave a shout, saying, it is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost. S. Luke, Acts xii. 20—23. The 'set day,' mentioned by S. Luke,

S. Luke, was the second day of the games in honour of the emperor Claudius; so that it was a double profanation of divine honours, given and assumed on that occasion, by both these princes and their flatterers, which was so judicially punished.

The insolence of the emperor Caius in placing his own statue in the temple at Jerusalem, was the progressive extreme of this impiety. The Jews had the glorious distinction of being the only nation in the empire, who opposed the sacrilege of deifying the imperial family.

But to return to the religious state of Rome, from which we have a little digressed: let us consider with attention that august republic, just before she expired under the ambition of her own citizens; and those superstitions, which prevailed when she was at the summit of her fortune in arms and science.

Cicero, on the death of his excellent and accomplished daughter, seriously intended her deification. His principle was, that the human soul, discerped from the soul of the universe, after death was re-fused into its parent-substance: but that the souls of the eminently great and good had a distinct existence, and partook of the divinity from which

which they were derived, in the subordinate state of heroes and demigods.

Cicero's conduct on this occasion is a demonstration, both of the absurd superstition of that enlightened age, and of the inefficacy of reason in regulating our ideas of divine things. Give me leave to present you in this place with a few extracts of that great man's letters, written to his confidential friend, from the gloomy solitude of the groves of Astura; where he was meditating, with all the complacency of grief, those impious honours, which even then appeared to have a tincture of insanity.

In his letters on that occasion, he has exhausted all the eloquence of grief. In the first he wrote after her death, xii. 16. he tells his friend, 'whenever my mind shall be open to consolation, yours will have the first access. Hitherto, nothing is preferable to this solitude—writing and study rather blunt than sooth my anguish.'

In xii. 9. of a subsequent date; 'You cannot imagine any thing more charming than this country-house, the shore, the prospect of the sea, and every object. But all this merits not a longer letter. Sleep comes on, my best restorative.' xii. 12. 'The isle of Arpinum (formed by the confluence of the Fibrenus and the Liris) 'is suitable enough for

' for the apotheosis of one of my family: but
 ' it is too much out of the way; and, I fear,
 ' will not reflect sufficient honour on the dear
 ' object.' After many passionate expressions
 of sorrow, he says, lett. 18. ' I am shy of
 ' intimating to you my present intentions:
 ' strange as they may seem, they must claim
 ' your indulgence. Some of those writers,
 ' with whom I am wholly employed, autho-
 ' rize what I have often mentioned to you.
 ' I speak of the temple, of which, I hope,
 ' you will think as favourably, as you do of
 ' other designs, which I have much at heart.
 ' I have no suspense, either about the kind
 ' of edifice, or about the thing itself, which
 ' is resolved upon. The place I have not
 ' yet determined. In these learned and po-
 ' lished times, I will engage the best abilities
 ' both of Greek and Roman writers, and
 ' employ every monument of genius to con-
 ' secrate her memory; though they must
 ' cause my wound to bleed afresh. But
 ' I now hold myself bound by a sacred
 ' vow: and I am more influenced to per-
 ' form it, by the consideration of that
 ' long succession of ages, when I shall be
 ' no more, than of the short remaining space
 ' of my own life, which has been but too long
 ' protracted.'

To

To Atticus, xiii. 26. ‘ You know how im-
 ‘ moderately fond I am, of my project of a
 ‘ temple : which makes me frequently recur
 ‘ to my first design of placing it at Tusculum.’
 And lett. 29. ‘ For the consecration I have
 ‘ so much at heart, no place seems more
 ‘ suitable than the grove.—In this one in-
 ‘ stance, my dear friend, humour my seem-
 ‘ ing arrogance.’ The celebrity of the fame
 of Tullia, and the honours of an apotheosis,
 might well be considered by himself and
 every one as an instance of great presumption.
 But superstition is a rank weed, the luxuri-
 ant growth of which is peculiar to certain
 climates: among which, Italy ancient and
 modern, has been ever distinguished, by a
 depraved taste for deifying and canonizing
 the dead. Had Cicero lived under papal
 Rome, his Tullia would probably have been
 canonized by a consistory of ecclesiastics.

‘ Mankind, says the excellent author whom
 ‘ I follow on the foregoing topics, having
 ‘ lost insensibly the true ideas of religion,
 ‘ which had been transmitted to them from
 ‘ the patriarchs; their understanding, instead
 ‘ of raising itself to the Supreme Being, stop-
 ‘ ped short at inferior and sensible causes.
 ‘ Hence, they adored the sun and the hea-
 ‘ venly bodies, as animated natures, and be-
 ‘ neficent to man. This principle led them
 ‘ to

‘ to deify the inventors of useful arts, wise
 ‘ politicians, and those who founded or con-
 ‘ quered kingdoms.’

Thus, the divine honours, which had been paid to the governors of provinces, while the republic subsisted, became the origin and model of those, which the Romans paid to their emperors. When Julius Cæsar, by his victories in Thrace and in Africa, had become absolute master of the republic; the slavish Romans gave him that incense, which the provinces had so profusely given to their proconsuls. The Senate began this impious farce, by ordering the statue of Cæsar to be carried with those of the gods, at the pomps of the circus.

Cicero, in his admirable Letters to Atticus, tells us, that Cæsar’s statue was carried in procession by the side of the statue of victory; and that the people, accustomed to applaud their favourite goddess, would not clap their hands, when they saw her statue accompanied by his, whose late victories had been fatal to their liberty. Yet he commends his friend, for carrying Attica to this procession, not only as an amusing spectacle, but as apt to impress her young mind with religious ideas.

The next instance of senatorial flattery, was to enact, that Cæsar’s statue should be
 placed

placed with those of the gods, in the ceremony of the lectisternium, when a sumptuous banquet was served up to the deities, reclined on beds or couches.

The most graceful compliment of this kind was, when, after being relieved from the terrors of a proscription, they erected a temple to Clemency, who was represented giving her hand to Cæsar's statue, with this inscription, CLEMENTIÆ CÆSARIS.

Cæsar had also a place in the temple of Romulus, with this abominable inscription, DEO INVICTO. Cicero humourously tells his friend, that of the two neighbouring temples, he had rather Cæsar should have a share in that of Romulus, (who fell by assassination) than in that of Salus.

Suetonius enumerates with his exact brevity the divine honours assumed by this great man, less great in this than in any part of his public character. 'He suffered honours
' to be decreed him above the condition of
' human nature: a golden chair in the senate-house and the forum: his statue carried in procession at the Circensian games
' in consecrated Thensæ: temples, altars, images: the pulvinar, or sacred couch:
' a Flamen, and Luperci.' After his death, the populace burned his body in the forum: strangers of many nations lamented him, particularly

particularly the Jews, who frequented his funeral pyre for several nights. A solid pillar of Numidian marble was erected in the forum, inscribed to the Father of his country: at this the populace continued to sacrifice, to make vows, and to decide controversies, by swearing by Cæsar's name. The column indeed was demolished by the consul Dolabella, whose conduct in this instance is extolled by Cicero. But the area was afterwards the site of a temple to his name only, an honour he did not assume in his life-time, otherwise than as an assessor with some other god.

Julius Cæsar in his questorship pronounced a funeral oration from the rostra, in praise of Julia and Cornelia, which may be considered as a prelude to the divine honours assumed by the Cæsars. 'Our family is distinguished
' both by the majesty of kings, the greatest
' among men; and by their descent from
' the gods, to whom kings themselves are
' subject.' When candidate for the high-priesthood, he bribed the suffrages so profusely, that he incurred an extravagant debt; and declared, that if he did not gain his election, he would live in exile. Till the year DCL, the pontiffs created the high-priest; afterwards, he was elected by the people in comitia. His military ac-
tions

tions were so successful, that the senate appointed an unprecedented number of supplications. While he stood in a kind suspense, or indecision, on the banks of the Rubicon; a phantom is said to have sounded a trumpet, and plunged into the river. The die was cast; and Cæsar, who contrived, accepted the omen. The triumph, and all the Roman spectacles were religious ceremonies. Even comedies, and all the representations of the theatre, were first introduced, and continued, as parts of a religion, which was equally magnificent and voluptuous.

The calendar had been brought into such confusion, by the remissness of the high-priests, that he undertook to adapt the year to the course of the sun. Among the other great projects which occupied his mind in the height of his power, he intended to erect a temple to Mars, of such unexampled magnificence, as to fill the area of the lake on which he had exhibited the naumachia at his triumph. After his pontificate, he lived in one of the public buildings in the via sacra.

He dedicated a corslet, set with British pearls, in the temple of Venus genetrix. In Gaul, he rifled the fanes and temples of their rich oblations. By such means, he amassed

amassed an immense treasure. In his first consulship, he robbed the capitol of 3000 pounds weight of gold; and supported the prodigious expence of the civil war, by rapine and sacrilege. Cæsar, the high-priest, was perhaps as much an atheist, as any man of his own or any times: he was never diverted from his designs by any religious scruples; and despised the religion over which he presided. After his death, he was consecrated by the senate, and esteemed by the vulgar a god, in good earnest. The comet, that appeared at the celebration of the games in honour of him, confirmed the popular prejudice. The comet itself was an object of divine worship, and was supposed to be the soul of Cæsar received into Heaven.

Among other divine honours granted in his life-time, the senate permitted him to have the privilege of a sepulchre, within the pomoerium: strongly expressing by this equivocal compliment, their idea of his mortality. The honours he assumed so licentiously, certainly hastened, if they did not occasion his assassination; which was more deserved for his impiety, than for any ill use of power: but it was a gross error, to claim those honours in an enlightened republic, which were only suited to a barbarous despotism.

The

The seventh century of the republic was distinguished by what may be deemed a decline in the interests of paganism, which may seem to militate against the argument for christianity, drawn from its prevalence over the established idolatry. Our love of truth leads us to state this seeming disadvantage in the state of gentilism with the same candour, with which we have stated the strength and power of that establishment. Its decline in the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century, is to be ascribed to two leading causes: the first, the general reception of the Epicurean philosophy, and the consequent depravation of the Roman manners; the second, the destruction of the exterior of the pagan establishment, its funds and temples, by the Greek seditions and Roman civil wars.

The first of these causes had powerful effects on the interior of gentilism; and, while it depraved the manners, seemed for a time to weaken the influence of superstition, by inducing the contrary extreme of atheism. I shall not attempt to decide so great a question, as the real nature and genius of the Epicurean philosophy. I am willing to suppose, with one of the greatest writers of this age, and the ablest critic in the Greek philosophy; that the physics of Epicurus were the most
impious,

impious, while his ethics were the most rational of any in the ancient schools. Cicero's eloquent invectives against the morality of Epicurus seem justly applicable to the prevailing abuse of that system in the practice of its followers: so that we need not hesitate to ascribe much of the profligacy, as well as the speculative impiety of that age to the prevalence of this philosophy. It was embraced by most of the Romans of high rank, and perverted to countenance their unbounded luxury. The system of Epicurus, like the modern Materialism, assumed an air of reason and speculation, which concealed even from its disciples its immoral tendency: the object both of the one and the other being only to make the present life a pleasurable one, and to indulge the characteristic propensities of its abettors. Many of the friends of Cicero, both in his political and literary connections, were deeply tinged with epicurean principles. Julius Cæsar professed them without disguise in open Senate. His mortal enemy, C. Cassius, of a stern and martial character, opposed the materialism of this sect to the credibility of the spectre of Brutus. The accomplished Atticus adorned it by the elegance of his manners, and recommended it to the politer Romans; who on the great revolution in the govern-

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ment,

ment, cultivated this philosophy as a voluptuary resource from the despotism of the times.

The poem of Lucretius is preserved to us as a memorable instance, that the brightest genius when left to its own efforts, is only distinguished from the vulgar, by more excentric deviations from religious truth. Cicero, who published this poem about the year of Rome DCCIII, gives its true character in few words—‘ Multis luminibus ingenii, multæ tamen artis.’ An able writer of our own times, a competent judge both of its poetical and philosophic merit, observes, that ‘ The poem of Lucretius is a melancholy spectacle; it is the picture of a great genius in the state of lunacy. Except when the whim of his sect comes across his imagination, he argues with propriety, perspicuity, and elegance, pathos of sentiment, sweetness of style, harmony of numbers, and a beauty, and sometimes a majesty of description, not unworthy of Virgil, render his poem highly amusing, in spite of its absurd philosophy.—So fatal is the admission of wrong principles.’ *

This poem had great effects on the philosophy and principles of the Augustan age. Lucretius had drawn up his poetical system of the atomic philosophy in his lucid intervals: and, such was the force of his genius

* Dr. BEATTIE, Essay on Truth, p. 178.

genius and expression, in adorning his dry and uninviting subject with the finest digressions, that his work became a model to the succeeding poets of that polite age. Virgil especially emulated the philosophy as well as poetry of Lucretius; and is so much the worse for it. His poetry, in other respects so natural, so chaste, so decent; so magnificent, harmonious, and pathetic; is debased to the lowest degree of turpitude and impiety, wherever it is infected by the system of Epicurus. Other celebrated writers, Horace, Ovid, and Propertius, both the Plinys, and perhaps Tacitus; and among the Greeks of a later age, Lucian and Athenæus, who ridicule all philosophy and all religions alike; gave this system that currency which results from that imperious guide of manners and opinions, the Fashion of the times. Thus the Epicurean philosophy was in vogue at Rome, and in such of the provinces as cultivated letters; especially in Judæa, where the whole sect of the Sadducees blended it with their corrupted religious system. I suspect the Sadducean sect not to have been of a name or period prior to the christian æra: Josephus, Ant. xviii. 1. relates, that ‘Judas the Gaulonite and Sadducus (from whom this sect probably derived its name) filled the civil government with tumults, and laid the foundations

dations of their future miseries, by their NEW or fourth system of philosophy; which, spreading its infection among the younger sort, brought destruction on their country. This sentiment of Josephus is well founded. The rejection of CHRIST by the Jewish nation, notwithstanding the splendour of his miracles, was principally occasioned by their philosophy, which opposed an insurmountable obstacle against the clearest evidence. The dæmonism of the Pharisees, and the materialism of the Sadducees, conspired to make both sects insensible of the evidence of christianity, till they felt it verified in the ruin of their country.

With respect to the influence of the Epicurean philosophy on the Roman manners and principles, on the gentile establishment and its subversion by the Gospel: it is easy to imagine, that the weakening the force of religious principle must have increased to a portentous degree the corruption of manners.

A memorable incident of the history of that age will serve to illustrate these reflections, and to shew the effects of the Epicurean philosophy, co-operating with the corruptions and calamities of the times, to induce a spirit of atheism among the great and learned, while the mass of the people became infected with a general profligacy. The unfortunate expedition

expedition of M. Crassus against the Parthians in DCCII. had great effects on the superstition of the Roman people, who generally ascribed his defeat to his contemptuous neglect of the auspices, and to the dire devotions of the tribune Ateius.

Dionysius makes some reflections on this event, which shew the relaxed spirit of the Roman religion in the age of that historian. II. 6. "The custom, relating to the auspices, continued to be long observed by the Romans, not only under their kings, but also after the dissolution of monarchy, in the elections of their consuls, prætors, and other legal magistrates: but it is disused at this time, the appearance of it being preserved only for form's sake. For, those who are designed magistrates, pass the night in tents, and rising by break of day, perform their prayers in the open air; then some of the augurs present, who are paid by the public, declare, that a flash of lightning from the left, which had not happened, signifies the approbation of the gods; and they, having by this report received the omen, depart, in order to enter upon their magistracies. Some looking upon this alone as sufficient, that no contrary or forbidding omens had appeared: others, even in opposition to the will of heaven prohibiting their election, and

and sometimes by violence, rather seize, than receive their dignities. By which means, many armies of the Romans have been utterly destroyed at land ; many fleets have been lost, with all their people, at sea ; and other great and dreadful calamities have befallen the commonwealth ; some, in foreign wars, and others in civil dissensions. But the most remarkable and the greatest happened, even in my time, when Licinius Crassus, a man inferior to no commander of his age, led his army against the Parthians, contrary to the will of heaven, and in contempt of the innumerable omens, that opposed his expedition. But a great deal might be said, concerning the contempt of the gods, that prevails among some people at this time."

Religious principle, in the best times of the republic, had an influence worthy of a purer system. When the republic was verging to its ruin, the religious principle had, in a great degree, lost its hold on the minds of the people. One of their poets, who has given the most shocking portrait of the Roman manners, tells us, that even children did not believe the religion of their ancestors.

Esse aliquos manes et subterranea regna,
Et contum et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque unam transire vadum tot milia cymba,
Nec pueri credunt—

Sed

Sed tu vera puta. Curius quid sentit, et ambo
 Scipiadae? Quid Fabricius? manesque Camilli?
 Quid Cremeræ legio, et Cannis consumpta juventus,
 Tot bellorum animæ? Quoties hinc talis ad illos
 Umbra venit, cuperent lustrari.—

JUVEN. II. 149.

The decline of religious principle in the Augustan age had undoubtedly a considerable influence on the reception of the gospel. As it induced a general profligacy, and a greater corruption of manners than was ever known before, at least in the Roman government: this prevailing *viciousness* made the times sensible of their malady; and the fashionable *impiety* predisposed the minds of men to renounce the follies of gentilism, of which the wiser gentiles were not insensible. Thus the decline of gentilism, consequent on the Epicurean philosophy, was so far favourable to the reception of christianity, as to gain it a more unprejudiced attention: and the christian teachers, by proving from their own philosophy the falsehood of gentilism, urged with greater efficacy the truth of Christianity.

But no sooner was gentilism in danger of losing ground, by the rapid progress of the Gospel; than the Epicurean philosophy fell into discredit, and the more religious
 sects

sects of Stoicism and the new Platonism took the lead. Thus gentilism was really stronger (after a temporary decline) both in its interior constitution, and in its external authority, under the imperial government, than ever it had been under the republic. Philosophy especially was never more respectable, since the age of Socrates, than now when it became the rival of Religion; and supported that rivalship, by the writings and the virtues of a Seneca, an Epictetus, an Aurelius.

A second cause of a temporary decline in the gentile establishment was the ruin of the temples, by length of time and civil wars, together with the rapine and sacrilege which prevailed in Greece and Italy, from the sacred war of Philip, to the accession of Augustus.

The Phocæans, being fined by the Amphictyons for aiding the expedition of Xerxes, were induced by Philomelus to throw off the yoke of that senate, and even to pillage the Delphian temple. This sacrilege kindled the sacred war of ten years continuance. I shall not enter into the historic detail of the well known events of that and the succeeding times. The confusions that took place in Greece were prejudicial to the religious establishment: and nothing is more common

common in the annals of that period than, rapine of the sacred treasures, burning and destroying the religious edifices, and a spirit of impiety before unknown in the polished states of Greece.

Philip II. king of Macedon during his long reign from the cXLth to the cLth Olympiad, occasioned a great devastation in the religious state of Greece, during his wars with the Ætolians and the Romans. The Ætolians at that period were a nation of banditti, who paid little regard to divine or human laws. The march of their armies is every where marked with rapine and profanation. The temples of Dium, of Dodona, were rifled by the Ætolian chiefs: Philip retaliated with equal sacrilege, at Thermum especially; as may be seen in Polybius. This prince had engaged himself in a quarrel with the Athenians, who had put to death two Acarnanians for inadvertently inspecting the mysteries. A. U, DLIV. he appeared before the walls of Athens, and burned all the religious edifices near his camp. At Eleusis, he attempted to surprize the temple: but was content to exert his violence on all the country of Attica, demolishing the tombs and temples of exquisite architecture.

Corinth was destroyed by Mummius, A. U. DCVIII. and in the same year Carthage was
demolished

demolished by Scipio Æmilianus. Metellus plundered the temples of the gods of their finest decorations. Thus Greece before she became a Roman province was weakened, says Pausanias, vii. 17. in every part.

A little before the Christian æra, both Carthage and Corinth were restored to their former splendour by Julius Cæsar; and St. Paul found idolatry so deeply rooted at Corinth, that he could with difficulty guard his converts from their old social principles.

Sylla made himself renowned in Greece by the most daring sacrilege and profanation. A. U. DCLXVIII. in order to raise money to carry on the siege of Athens, he had recourse to the treasures of the temples; those of Epidaurus and Olympia were plundered of their richest offerings; he wrote to the Amphictyons at Delphi, to send him the treasures of the god, and sent a trusty person to receive them all by weight. Such was the apparent impiety of this commission, that it was executed with superstitious reluctance. The Delphian temple was plundered of an inestimable treasure: and the unfortunate Greeks regretted the better days of Roman virtue. It is probable that many of the temples were destroyed, as well as plundered: as we know they were rebuilt by Hadrian. Sylla had conceived an impla-

implacable hatred to the Thebans, and ordained that one moiety of their territories should be consecrated to the Pythian Apollo and the Olympian Jupiter: and that the revenue should be applied to make good the money he had taken out of their temples. In DCLXX. he was initiated in the great mysteries: and seized on the library of Apellicon, which contained the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus. Such a compound was Sylla of superstition, sacrilege, literature and cruelty. The Delphian temple did not recover this last shock: and the dispersion of the treasures of the most respected temple and oracle in Greece was a circumstance favourable to the new religion.

The long civil dissensions, from the Marfic war to the battle of Actium, had considerable effects on the religious establishment. This period is for above sixty years distinguished by scenes of intestine discord, the last convulsions of the expiring republic. Cinna, the Mariusses, Sylla, Spartacus, Mithridates, Catiline, Verres, Clodius, Crassus, Cæsar, Antony and Octavius, are perhaps a set of as pernicious and unprincipled characters, as are any where grouped in history. We may well imagine that the respect of religion was no check to their sanguinary and destructive enterprizes. The hostile motions of these powerful men at the head of opposite armies, effected

effected that desolation in Italy and the provinces, which it required all the policy of Augustus to repair. This great politician expressly undertook to restore and re-establish the Roman Religion :

AUGUSTUS, whose political talents were equal to those of the great Julius in arms and ambition ; and who excelled him in his discernment of the absolute necessity of an established religion ; turned his attention to revive, restore and complete the complicated system of paganism, which was generally received in that age. In the regulations of Augustus we have a perfect exemplification of a religion *established* with all the strength of policy over the whole Roman Empire. Paganism was even in a considerable degree *reformed* by him, and made as respectable as such a superstition could be ; by abolishing its grossest corruptions, by regulating the priesthood, rebuilding the temples, and giving the utmost dignity and splendour to the whole exterior of idolatrous worship. This great work was completed by Augustus about the DCCXLth year of Rome ; when, on the demise of Lepidus, he assumed the pontificate, and annexed it in himself and his successors to the imperial titles. This office, which was a kind of popedom armed with all the despotism of the
Roman

Roman empire, put the whole power of religion into his hands: and enabled him to complete its establishment, at that critical period, when the infant Jesus was born in the obscurity of a village in Palæstine.

In order to discern the several steps and progress of the Augustan establishment, it will be useful to trace it farther back: and to arrange in order of time the several religious innovations made by this emperor.

A. U. DCCXXIII, Septemb. 2. Augustus became master of the empire by the victory at Actium: on this great event, he consecrated a temple, quinquennial games, and festivals, with naval spoils and trophies, to the Actian Apollo. Dio. l. 51. c. 1.

In DCCXXIX Agrippa finished the pantheon; which had that appellation, not because it contained the statues of *all* but of the *principal* Gods, particularly of Mars and Venus, the tutelary divinities of Rome. Agrippa intended to add to them the image of Augustus; but the politic emperor refused this dangerous adulation in his capital city, on the same principle, on which he afterwards refused the dictatorship. Yet the statues of Augustus and Agrippa were placed in the vestibule of that noble edifice; which seemed to give that completeness to the new establishment, which the Capitol had given to the

the old pagan system. New ornaments and decorations were also added to the Capitoline temples of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.

The rebuilding of the temples, that had been burnt down or ruined by time, began soon after the conclusion of the civil wars. It was a work of many years, and Tiberius completed those which Augustus left unfinished.

A. U. DCCXXVII, Sextus Pacuvius introduced at Rome, a custom which had long obtained in Spain, (and of which there are some vestiges in the attachment expressed for Julius Cæsar in a letter of his friend and confident the celebrated Balbus, ‘ita incolumi Cæsare moriar’) that of DEVOTING himself to Cæsar. This he did in open senate: and, in the enthusiasm of flattery, he compelled every one he met to do the same, and to sacrifice to Augustus. The formulary was DEVOTED to the DEITY and MAJESTY of the emperor. In Dio’s time, they addressed the emperors, as we now do our kings, perhaps improperly; *σοι καὶ δοσινυμεθα*, your *devoted* subjects. The historian adds, that Pacuvius who was not rich, made Augustus coheir with his son, and was well paid for his flattery. Yet notwithstanding this devotion, the emperor could not prevent many conspiracies, by Salvidienus, Lepidus, Muræna, Cæpio, Egnatius, Cinna.

In

In DCCXXXII, Augustus built the temple of Jupiter Tonans, in such a situation as to intercept the worship of Jupiter Capitolinus. The latter by a dream complained of the incivility; Augustus assured him, that he only meant Jupiter Tonans for his porter, and hung the temple of the thunderer with bells.

The next year, Agrippa, as governour of Rome, suppressed the Ægyptian rites of Isis and Serapis; and forbad them to be solemnized within the city, and a mile of the suburbs. The senate had never any favourable opinion of those gods, and had heretofore prohibited their worship and demolished their temples. Yet, so besotted was all the world with Egyptian superstition, yet they always kept their ground in pagan Rome.

In DCCXXXIV, Augustus consecrated the Roman standards restored by the Parthians, in the new temple of Mars the Avenger, in the capitol, or rather in the forum: and in the same year, at the instance of Pomponius Atticus, he rebuilt the temple of Feretrian Jupiter. He was initiated at Athens in the greater mysteries, solemnized in the month of October. Zarmarus, an Indian sage, was also initiated, and afterwards immortalized himself on his own funeral pile. On his return from Greece, he consecrated an altar to Fortuna Redux; and permitted an annual
feast

feast to his own divinity called the *Augustalia*.

The union of the magistracy and priesthood in the same person gave the highest authority to the established religion. The high-priesthood first annexed to the imperial dignity in Augustus, armed him with a complete despotism in religion and policy. 'Nunc, deum munere, summum pontificem etiam summum hominum esse:' says Tacitus. Both these powers are expressed on the imperial medals: *AUG. P. P. PONT. MAX. TR. POT.* The pontifical title gave the jurisdiction over religion, as the tribunician power did over the empire: yet even this last was of a religious nature; for the tribunician power made the emperor's person sacred and inviolable: this gave him the privilege of repealing or annulling all other powers of legislation. Thus it had all the authority of the dictatorship without the envy and danger. The imperial power included that of consul and of generalissimo, the dictatorial, proconsular, tribunitian, and censorial powers of the old republic, together with the high priesthood, which made him sole master of religion. Such a power, supported by forty legions, will evince to any reflecting mind, that the establishment of paganism was of a nature not to be surmounted by any religion

Augustus

in opposition to it; much less by a religion so pure and abstracted as that of CHRIST, had not His divine pretensions been demonstrated by overcoming such an obstacle.

Augustus had a privy council of fifteen senators, chosen every six months. A little before his death he renewed the tribunitian power to Tiberius, and assigned him a council of twenty. The succeeding emperors had also a council, which attended them on military expeditions. The emperor and the council transacted all business. The senate was consulted out of mere form, and only ratified the decisions of the cabinet. Such was the despotism of the Roman Emperors, which is asserted as an inherent right by the *Lex Regia. QUOD PRINCIPI PLACUIT, LEGIS HABET VIGOREM.* This idea of the imperial government accounts for the secrecy, celerity, and strict execution of those mandates, which soon became grievous and oppressive to the new religion. This enhances the miracle, that the christian religion could at all subsist, much more that it should flourish and prevail, in direct *opposition* to the established religion of the empire: for the case of *opposition* to an old and powerful establishment is to be carefully distinguished from any attempt to new model or *reform* it.

His

His first proceeding in his pontificate was to burn 2000 volumes of pretended prophecies: reserving only a select collection of Sibylline oracles, which he deposited in two gilt cases under the statue of the Palatine Apollo. He next reformed the Calendar, which the priests had suffered to run into confusion after the death of Cæsar. He augmented the number, dignity, and revenues of the priesthood, especially of the Vestals, one of the most plausible superstitions of pagan and papal Rome. He restored several ancient ceremonies, which time had effaced or altered: his attention even to the morality of his establishment appeared, in his prohibiting young persons of different sexes to frequent the nocturnal spectacles of the secular games, except in the company of some of their older relations. In fine (for I do not attempt a fuller detail) he repaired and rebuilt the temples of the gods with great magnificence, so as to merit the title of the founder and RESTORER OF ALL THE TEMPLES.

In DCCXIV, on the taking of Perugia, 400 knights and senators were led to an altar consecrated to Julius, and there put to death as victims to his manes. An act of barbarity, we should almost deem incredible! The Perusians were put to the sword, and the buildings

buildings set on fire, except the temple of Vulcan. A statue of Juno, which escaped the flames, was carried to Rome 'propter somnium Cæsaris.'

Divine honours were paid to Octavian, in the provinces, so early as A. U. DCCXVIII, after the naval victory of Mylæ over Sextus Pompey. * Sextus himself, on a storm which wrecked the fleet of Octavian, sacrificed to the Neptune and the Ocean, called himself their son, and wore an azure robe, in token of the adoption. Appian, p. 1154. The ridicule of paganism was so gross, as sometimes to make us lose sight of its power and popular influence. What could be more ridiculous, than Mark Antony, emulating the triumphs of the Indian Bacchus, in a chariot drawn by lions, with the courtesan Cytheris? or, than the same Antony with Cleopatra, styling themselves Osiris and Isis, and their children, the sun and moon? Antony himself rallied the Athenians on their absurdity, when they offered him the alliance of Minerva, by demanding of them a costly marriage-portion with the goddess.

Augustus permitted temples to himself every where except in Rome. At Alexandria,

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* Αυτοι 'αι πολεις τοις σφ'τεροις θεοις συνιδρουν, says Appian, p. 1178. 1154. consult Pighius III. 493. Suet. c. 15. Seneca de Clem. i. 11. Dio. xlviii. 14.

andria, a magnificent temple was erected to him, as the protector of mariners. Philo. p. 784.

The Spaniards of Arragon set the first example to the provinces of building temples to Augustus: The good provincials acquainting him as with a happy omen, that a palm-tree had sprouted from his altar, 'it is plain, said he, how often you kindle it.'

Virgil's exquisite flattery was paid to the divine honours of Augustus, so early as DCCXVII. In his Georgics, i. 24. iii. 16. the poet acts the master of the ceremonies in this farce of superstitious adulation; and leads the way to all the honours of the apotheosis, temples, supplications, sacrifices, statues, theatrical representations, games, and trophies. On the wonderful poetic artifice of that noble allegory, in the third Georgic, you will recollect the fine criticism * which charmed us in our youth, almost as much, as the allegory itself.

Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita superstit,

Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas :

Primus Idumæas referam tibi Mantua palmas ;

Et viridi in campo templorum de marmore ponam,

Propter aquam tardis ingens ubi flexibut errat

Mincius, et tenera prætexit arundine ripas.

In medio mihi Cæsar erit, TEMPLUMQUE TENEBIT.

The

* Bishop HURD, notes on the epistle to Augustus, v. 15.

The great poet refers to his 6th Æneid, and to his shield of Æneas, *con amore*, in these magnificent lines,

Atque hic undantem bello, magnumque fluentem
Nilum, ac navali surgentes ære columnas.

Addam urbes Asiæ domitas——

Stabunt et Parii lapides, spirantia signa,

Assaraci proles——

Invidia infelix furias amnemque severum

Cocytî metuet, tortosque Ixionis angues,

Immanemque rotam, et non exuperabile saxum.

The senate, in his life time, gave him leave to have as many priests as he pleased. The same power in the succeeding emperors occasioned the number of the priests to become immense. This may be considered as a great obstacle to christianity. Among the converts to christianity are reckoned some philosophers, but very few, if any of the gentile priesthood: nor did any order of men so vehemently oppose the gospel, as the Jewish and gentile priests, and their numerous retainers.

Augustus placed the altar of victory in the Julian senate-house, to express, that he held the empire by right of conquest: but in the plenitude of his power, he thought it prudent to go armed, to wear a corslet under his robe,

robe, and to have a good sword, with ten trusty senators near his person.

In DCCXXXVI, he commissioned the Quindecimviri to copy the Sibylline books with their own hands, in order to prevent their being read by any else. These books were considered as the canon of gentilism. This year he celebrated games to Virtue and Honour, and also the secular games, the fifth time from their original institution.

In DCCXXXVIII, he built the temple of Quirinus, with seventy-six columns; a circumstance which was converted into a foolish presage, that he should live just so many years. About this time the temple of Youth was burnt down. Into this temple every Roman youth paid a capitation tax, on assuming the manly gown. This must have formed an immense treasure.

In DCCXLI, the senate offered to erect an altar to the living divinity of Augustus, with the privilege of an asylum: but he wisely declined the dangerous as well as impious compliment; and, the next day, ascending the capitol, he took the laurel from his fasces, and placed it with great devotion on the knees of the statue of Jupiter. This year he dedicated the theatre of Marcellus; and in honour of his grandson Caius, instituted the Troja ludus, so splendidly described by Virgil.

Virgil. Being made master of manners, with the powers of the censorship, for another term of five years; he ordered, that the senators, before they proceeded to public business, should offer incense and wine in the temple of that god, wherein they were assembled.

The religious establishment by Augustus was not properly completed till this year; about twelve years before the birth of CHRIST. The chasm in the 55th book of Dion Cassius is peculiarly to be regretted, as it included that illustrious epoch. This interval may be usefully filled up with some observations on the genius of the gentile establishment perfected by Augustus; and guarded by his successors with all the vigilance of despotism, with a formed intention to extirpate christianity, as not coalescing with, and even hostile to the religion of the state.

The famous speech of Mæcenas in Dio, lib. 52, though minted in the brain of the historian not of the minister, is perfectly expressive of the true nature of the religious establishment of Augustus, and the obstacle it threw in the way of christianity. §. 36, he thus counsels the emperor. ‘ By all means, ‘ be exemplary yourself in worshipping the ‘ Divine Nature, and *compel* others to honour ‘ it, according to the religion of your empire.

'pire. But those who make any innovations
 'in it, both hate and punish; not only
 'through honour to the gods, the contempt
 'of whom is incompatible with any respect
 'for civil government; but because such in-
 'novators, by introducing new divinities, se-
 'duce many to change their civil subjection.
 'Hence arise conspiracies, seditions, and as-
 'sociations, very incompatible with mo-
 'narchy. Therefore tolerate no *atheist*, nor
 'magician. Prophecy indeed, or divination
 'is a necessary science: therefore, appoint
 'auspices and augurs, to be consulted by such
 'as choose it. But magicians are not to be
 'tolerated by any means; for such, though
 'they utter some truths, invent more false-
 'hoods, and encourage in the people a spirit
 'of innovation.' The historian, while he
 paints the jealous complexion of the Roman
 establishment, gives a false colour to the re-
 ligion of the gospel. This is the sect he de-
 lineates, as introducing new deities, the very
 charge alleged against St. Paul at the court
 of Areopagus. They are the innovators, so
 opposite to the genius of paganism, which
 was supposed to involve the safety of the
 state. Theirs were the *hetæriæ*, or clan-
 destine meetings in times of persecution, so
 strictly prohibited by the Roman laws. The
 christians were reproached as *atheists*, because
 they

they rejected the popular gods : their *prophecies* and those of the Old Testament, are stigmatized as impostures, their *miracles* as magic. This oblique acknowledgment of the existence of both, from such a superstitious calumniator as Dio, is of considerable weight in addition to the christian evidence of the miracles and prophecies of the apostolic age.

Augustus himself laid so much stress on his establishment of religion, that he has recorded it very circumstantially on the Ancyran monument. In that famous inscription, drawn up by his own hand, he specifies the temples he had repaired or built ; the spoils he had replaced in them ; the donations of his own magnificence ; and his general care of the religion of the state.

Augustus in his religious establishment did not act merely as a politician : he supported the religion of the empire with perfect sincerity and good faith, and from the dictates of an inherent superstition.

Many instances of the superstition of Augustus are given by Suetonius, c. 90. but they are too trifling and ridiculous to merit attention, were it not that such personal traits characterise princes more exactly than their great exploits. ‘ He was so afraid of
‘ thunder and lightening, that he carried a
‘ seal-

‘ seal-skin about with him in every place as
‘ a protection. He never slighted his own
‘ dreams, or those of others concerning him.
‘ Omens and auspices he deemed infallible.
‘ If his shoes were put on wrong in the
‘ morning, the left before the right, he
‘ thought it an ill presage. He observed
‘ particular days: he would never begin a
‘ journey, the day after the *nundinæ*, or
‘ enter on any important business on the
‘ nones—as being ominous. He observed
‘ the rites of foreign religions, if they were
‘ ancient and legal.’ In much that follows,
the biographer is as superstitious as the emperor, and gives a lively picture of the superstition of the Augustan age.

It was the fortune of this great prince, to outlive all his dearest hopes and connections. In *DCCXLVI*, died *Mæcenas* and *Horace*. So early as *DCCXXI*, he had lost the young *Marcellus*, son to his sister *Octavia*, whose birth and whose death are so sublimely and so pathetically celebrated by *Virgil*, in his fourth *Eclogue* and the sixth of the *Æneid*. His remaining hope in *Caius* and *Lucius*, the sons of *Agrippa* and *Julia*, was disappointed by their immature deaths in *DCCLV*. So that he was in a manner compelled to leave that vast succession to *Tiberius*. He was displeased, with his grandsons, for asking the consulate:

consulate: but he conferred the augurship on Lucius, the priesthood on Caius; titles then befitting the heirs of his empire. Tiberius had beheld these aspiring youths with a jealous eye; and before their deaths, he thought it proper to retire to Rhodes. In his way thither, he compelled the Samians to sell him a fine statue of Vesta, which he dedicated in the temple of Concord. During this recess, he studied astrology under Thrasyllus. This prince, and Augustus himself, were the dupes of the astrology then in vogue. Agrippa had expelled the astrologers from Rome: their chief pretence, as well as crime, was that of predicting the death of great persons. Augustus prohibited this vain effort of a vain art. It was made capital by the imperial law, to predict the death of the emperor.

The death of Augustus, A. U. DCCLXVII. we may well imagine, wanted no circumstance of religious honours. The very house in which he died was consecrated; as was also his pontifical palace at Rome: and a temple was erected to him at Nola. His will was in the custody of the Vestals, together with three volumes, written by his own hand: containing a breviary of the state of the empire and directions to his successor. Dio. lvi. 27. Scalig. on Euseb. chr. p. 181. Tacit, i. 1—11,

Tiberius

Tiberius spoke his funeral oration. Dio has given the substance of it in his own style. lvi. 35—41. he speaks of his care of religion and repairing the temples. c. 40. and concludes with reciting the divine honours, conferred on Augustus by the senate, To complete the farce, an eagle was let out from the top of the funeral pyre, to bear his soul to heaven; and Numerius Atticus was bribed to swear, that he saw him in the ascent. His apotheosis equalled the highest pagan worship. He was immortalized, consecrated, and deified in form, with temples, priests, and altars, throughout the Roman empire.

The senate decreed him an heröum or chapel at Rome; and, till it could be finished, his image of gold was laid on a bed in the temple of Mars, and there worshipped. His flamines performed the rites, and the good empress Livia was the high-priestess, Dio. lvi. 46. These impious honours prevailed all over the empire; and the Cyzicians were disfranchised, for neglecting to finish the heröum of Augustus. Dio. lvii. 24. The senate themselves were sensible of this excess of impiety: and decreed that no such honours should henceforth be given or assumed; and that the day of his death should be

be solemnized by the four pontifical orders, and by a new college added to them.

In DCCLXVIII, One and twenty of the first nobility were formed into this new priesthood, the Augustales. Tiberius, his son Drusus, and the royal brothers Claudius and Germanicus, were added to the number. This was the precedent followed by the succeeding emperors, who had each his college of priests, Hadrianales, Æliani, Antoniniani, &c.

The Ubian altar at Bonne or Cologne was erected in honour of this new divinity; as was also the famous altar at Lyons, by the sixty states of Gaul.

Lord Bacon has finely characterised this prince.* He is distinguished by those great views, which become sovereigns. It was his true glory, on the principles of paganism, to have established religion, united the empire, amended the laws, reformed the senate, promoted agriculture, restored the finances, and corrected manners. To this just praise, we may add his public magnificence and encouragement of genius and literature.

HADRIAN, a prince whose great capacity was only equalled by his superstition, gave the same lustre to the religion of Greece, which Augustus had given to the Roman establishment.

* Works, vol. III. p. 727. edit. Lond. 1753.

establishment. Pausanias, a sincere and devout polytheist, speaks in raptures of Hadrian's support and revival of the religion of Greece. He styles him the most religious of princes, and the most attentive to make his empire happy: it would furnish an ample detail, to relate how many temples he built, enriched, or decorated: his benefits of this kind were recorded at Athens, in a temple consecrated to all the gods. i. 5.

Thus it appears, that it was not an old and worn-out establishment, which the christian religion had to contend with: but under every apparent disadvantage, without temples, altars, statues, or endowments, persecuted and disgraced to the utmost, it subverted gentilism in its highest degree of splendour and authority.

Pausanias in his accurate travels, makes us spectators of the Greek religion. It is a genuine picture of the gentilism of the evangelic age: the writer was himself initiated at Eleusis; full of veneration for the religion of his ancestors, it does not appear that he has taken any notice of christianity throughout his ample collections. Yet he confirms that portrait of the Greek idolatry, which is occasionally given us by St. Paul, and St. Luke. Thus in the very opening of his work, he mentions several 'altars consecrated to the unknown gods

gods.' He speaks in the plural, meaning that *each* altar was inscribed to an unknown God. And it is thus, that St. Paul, from his own inspection cited the inscription of one of these altars to the Athenians themselves in the Areopagus.

This writer is so redundant in his recital of sacred edifices, statues, paintings; as to furnish any one with the most convincing demonstration of the firm establishment of the Grecian idolatry, when St. Paul and his associates undertook the heroic enterprize of making a progress through the most learned and polished cities of Greece and Asia, in order to subvert the national polytheism.

All history concurs in evidence, how little can be effected in changing religious establishments, however absurd, by human means. Reason in vain employs her persuasive powers against inveterate superstition, who, 'like the deaf adder, refuses to hear the charmer's voice, charm she never so wisely.' God alone can effect such a change in the religion of a great empire, as the gospel produced in the first and second centuries; and it is impossible to solve so singular a problem, otherwise than by admitting a divine and a miraculous agency.

If we may be permitted to illustrate in a familiar way, this great achievement of the
christian

christian religion ; supposing there was nothing more than human and natural effects of rational causes, in the suppression of the Roman idolatry, let us imagine a parallel case at present. Let us imagine a virtuous and rational philosopher or deist, with twelve or more of his associates, the best and wisest of their school, to have the courage or temerity to assault the principles, not of the Christian Church, but of that corrupted part of it which most resembles paganism, the church of Rome. Let them set about this great work in person, with incredible perseverance visiting all the countries where saint-worship is now established. Let them preach and write the purest tenets of natural religion, to which the human mind every where assents. Let them demonstrate the falsity and imposture of the papal system, particularly in multiplying the objects of divine worship. This, we know, has been done with all the precision of proof and certainty, by our protestant divines. Yet the popish establishment has subsisted above a thousand years; and will subsist in all its grandeur and opulence, till the time appointed for its subversion in the decrees of heaven, and recorded in the archives of christianity.

On the foregoing supposition, should the papal establishment be assaulted in its strong holds

holds at Rome, Madrid, or Lisbon ; the bold Preacher either of natural religion or the primitive Gospel, so far from succeeding in his enterprize, would be the victim of the inquisition, and his opinions would expire with his person.

Should this argument be opposed, by alleging the wonderful success, that has attended Luther's great and daring achievement ; I should not hesitate, to ascribe the prevalence of the reformation in the sixteenth century to the same Omnipotent though not miraculous protection, which watched over the original fortunes of christianity.

What can be effected by *force* or *policy* in propagating this celestial system hath been exemplified in some memorable instances. The Crusades which exhausted the combined powers of Europe, in the xiith and xiiith centuries made few or no conversions in Asia : while the apostles, armed with no power but of miracles, carried their doctrine beyond the bounds of the Roman empire, and to those regions into which their conquering armies had never penetrated. A religion which disclaims all force, and rests on persuasion only, and at the same time aspires to universality, can only justify its claim by MIRACLES : and if its pretensions are justified by

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the event, the effect is properly miraculous and divine.

What may be done in such an enterprize merely by human *counsels*, was exemplified in the beginning of this age, in the plausible but unsuccessful attempt to introduce the christian religion into the empire of China. Notwithstanding the concurrence of many favourable circumstances, the Missionaries were obliged to take a final leave of that empire in MDCCXX: and few if any vestiges of their religious labours are now remaining in China, where the ancient worship of the heavens, of their ancestors, princes, legislators, and of Confucius, is still the established religion. It is easy to assign the true reasons of the failure of that enterprize. The chicanery, the artifice, the concealment of the truth, the impious compliance with falshood, and the scandalous dissensions of the Chinese missions, were the very reverse of that sacred simplicity, with which the gospel was diffused over the roman empire. Not that the success of this arduous enterprize can possibly be accounted for from any natural or human causes. The agents in that great work were so disproportioned to the attempt and its effect, as to leave the glory of a divine and miraculous energy clear and unequivocal. From every circumstance of the prevalence of christianity; from the nature of the religion, the character

character of its teachers, and the conduct of the most powerful and arbitrary government in support of a most inveterate and politic Superstition: we must conclude, that the subversion of gentilism and the establishment of christianity was miraculous and divine.

That the age of Augustus was 'the fulness of time,' and the most suitable for the sending the SON OF GOD to redeem the world, hath been shewn by many writers. Origen, who has anticipated most of the arguments of the moderns, says much in few words.* At the conclusion of his second book against Celsus, he expresses the just inference which follows from an attentive survey of the ancient polytheism: 'I know not, says Origen, whether a mere man, who attempted to sow the seeds of his own opinions in religion over all the world, could be able, without the assistance of GOD, to effect his design; and could rise superiour to all the obstacles, which opposed the prevalence of his doctrine, from kings and governours, from the Roman senate, from the magistrates in all countries, and from the people. How could mere humanity, having nothing higher in itself, convert so great a multitude?---But CHRIST effected these things, and still effects them, notwithstanding the opposition

* Contre Celsus, lib. I. §. 25. &c. lib. II. §. 30. 79.

‘ opposition of the unbelieving Jews and
 ‘ Gentiles; because he was the power of
 ‘ GOD, and the wisdom of THE FATHER.’

Several important consequences follow, from the nature and genius of the pagan establishment.

1. An establishment of such strength and duration could not have been shaken by any *human* power inferiour to its own.

2. The intellectual blindness of man, in the Augustan and all preceding ages of gentilism, required a divine revelation to illuminate his mind in the principles of theism, and to redeem him from his vices and superstitions.

3. The subversion of this portentous fabric of idolatry is a sufficient proof of a divine revelation having been actually announced to the world.

4. It is our duty to consider, that the evidence for the christian religion resulting from this and other proofs is not impaired by length of time: and convinced by these attestations, we ought without suspence to believe and obey the gospel of JESUS CHRIST, as being *made to us of God, wisdom and righteousness, and redemption and sanctification.*

Any person at all acquainted with antiquity, must acknowledge the extirpation of
 idolatry

idolatry to have been solely the effect of the christian religion ; which it could not have effected by such weak instruments, had it not been the revelation and peculiar care of heaven. So plain a fact as that great revolution in the religion of mankind is, in the elegant expression of an able defender of revelation, ‘ an additional proof that our religion is from God, adds another motive to the power of its influence, and another ray to the splendour of its evidence.’ *

If then we seek for demonstrations of the truth of the christian religion ; here we have one founded on the most evident and striking fact.

Another reflection is no less certain. THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD. If the modern world can boast of superiour wisdom, it is the gift of revelation : and our philosophers of the present age, had they been contemporaries of Socrates and Plato, of Varro and Cicero, would have made their adorations to the whole rabble of pagan idols.

I have forbore to speak of the immoral nature of gentilism ; because that topic, of all the most interesting in this enquiry, will not bear to be exposed in its native deformity. The

* Dr. BELL, preface to his Enquiry into the divine missions of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

The classical colouring thrown over genti-
lism by gentile writers is still apt to dazzle
us, and to divert our attention from its
turpitude and profligacy. What a flatter-
ing picture, for instance, is drawn by the
lively pencil of our elegant Historian!
Ch. XV. p. 464. ‘The religion of the na-
‘tions was not merely a speculative doctrine
‘professed in the schools, or preached in the
‘temples. The innumerable deities and rites
‘of polytheism were closely interwoven with
‘every circumstance of business or pleasure,
‘of public or private life.—The important
‘transactions of peace and war were prepared
‘or concluded by solemn sacrifices.—The
‘public spectacles were an essential part of
‘the cheerful devotion of the pagans.—If we
‘cast our eyes over the numerous remains
‘of antiquity; we shall perceive, that besides
‘the immediate representations of the gods,
‘and the holy instruments of their worship;
‘the elegant forms and agreeable fictions, con-
‘secrated by the imagination of the Greeks,
‘were introduced as the richest ornaments
‘of the houses, the dress, and the furniture
‘of the pagans. Even the arts of music and
‘painting, of eloquence and poetry, flowed
‘from the same impure origin.’

Such is the fancy-piece of paganism,
drawn by the hand of a master, made up of
sacrifices,

sacrifices, processions, spectacles, feasts, and good humour, and all the arts of elegance. But a very slight glance on the real genius of the ancient idolatry, would vindicate the anxious diligence of the first christians, 'to preserve themselves pure and undefiled by the practice of it;' and to screen them from that sarcastic vein of censure, in which our eloquent author indulges himself on this subject, where their constancy, good sense, and virtue were so eminently distinguished. 'The dangerous temptations, which on every side lurked in ambush to surprize the unguarded believer, assailed him with redoubled violence on the days of solemn festivals. So artfully were they framed and disposed throughout the year, that superstition always wore the appearance of pleasure, and often of virtue. Some of the most sacred festivals in the Roman ritual were destined to salute the new calends of January with vows of public and private felicity, to indulge the pious remembrance of the dead and living, to ascertain the inviolable bounds of property, to hail on the return of spring the genial powers of fecundity, to perpetuate the two memorable æras of Rome, the foundation of the city and that of the republic, and to restore, during the humane license of the saturnalia, the primitive

‘ primitive equality of mankind. Some idea
 ‘ may be conceived of the abhorrence of the
 ‘ christians for such impious ceremonies—
 ‘ Such was the anxious diligence, which was
 ‘ required to guard the chastity of the gospel
 ‘ from the infectious breath of idolatry.—By
 ‘ their frequent protestations, their attach-
 ‘ ment to the faith was continually fortified;
 ‘ and in proportion to the increase of zeal,
 ‘ they combated with the more ardour and
 ‘ success in the holy war, which they had un-
 ‘ dertaken against the empire of the demons.’

Our historian might have abated of the fe-
 verity of these sarcastic reflections on the
 real and unexampled heroism of the christi-
 ans; had he reflected on those enormities of
 every kind, in which consisted the essence of
 gentilism, as a system of cruelty, lust, and
 every vice. It would be easy to verify each
 circumstance of St. Paul’s description of
 gentile corruptions in all his epistles, espe-
 cially to the Romans: and Grotius, has per-
 formed that task with his usual erudition.
 Our author somewhere refers us to Herodo-
 tus for the most genuine accounts of idolatry.
 I concur with the learned historian in this
 appeal to the father of history; who in his
 account of Egypt writes a comment on the
 pentateuch, by describing those enormities,
 which

which the Mosaic institutions were designed to prevent. There we see all Egypt in a riot on the banks of the Nile, and its temples stained with ineffable pollutions. There we find the temples of Belus and of Mylitta scenes of prostitution which must not be related. The Roman bacchanals, the worship of Serapis, and numberless instances might be alleged in later and more polished times. In fine, the most tremendous libertinism marks every period of idolatry in all nations; and every enormity was consecrated by the very examples of the Gods.*

It would require a work of equal extent, and composed with equal advantages of leisure and literature, to examine all parts of this author's system, on the subject of polytheism and christianity. But I will detain you no longer at present, on a topic which I intend to pursue from the age of Augustus to that of Theodosius the Great: the victory of christianity over gentilism, in that long and arduous contest, affords a moral demonstration, that its prevalence was properly MIRACULOUS and therefore DIVINE. Should I adventure farther on this great argument, I propose to examine distinctly each of those five

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* HERODOT. libb. I. II. JOSEPH. Antt. XVIII. 3. LIV.

causes of the growth of christianity assigned by this Historian; and to assert the divinity of the Christian Religion “ from 1. The inflexible zeal of the primitive christians. 2. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance, which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. 3. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church. 4. The pure and austere morals of the christians. 5. The union and discipline of the Christian Church.”

I am, SIR, with great respect

and deserved esteem,

Your most affectionate Friend

DECEMB. 1.
M. DCC. LXXVII.

and Faithful Servant.

E. A.

REMARKS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I. P. 251.

Paganism is an immense field. I have only attempted a general view of its public establishment, before the evangelic age. Those who are disposed to pursue this enquiry, will find abundant resources in all the ancient writers. Cicero's theological writings, and his academics, which contain his own principles in religion and philosophy—The fragments of Varro, who excelled on this subject—The first book of Valerius Maximus—The historians and poets, especially of the Augustan age—Ancient inscriptions, collected by Gruter and Reinefius, chh. I. and IV.—The great work of Vossius, de idololatria, in ix books—and Montfaucon's antiquities with the supplement, vol. I.—will give a sufficient idea of gentilism, as an argument for the *necessity* of a divine revelation. The suppression of gentilism furnishes a conclusive argument for the actual *existence* of a divine revelation. The Fathers of the church are full of erudition, eloquence, and good sense, on this subject. Mr. G. depreciates their writings on many occasions, and p. 517. says, 'it is much to be lamented, that such a cause was not defended by abler advocates: they expose with superfluous wit and eloquence the extravagance of polytheism.' I would not rashly dissent from so able a critic, who has the popular prejudice in his favour, when he speaks of the unskilfulness of the ancient apologists. For my own part, the more I read, the more I esteem them. I revere their eminent piety and sanctity of manners; I respect and admire their profound and various erudition; and in such of them as I have read, I perceive the seeds and germs of the most admired modern theories. My own collections from them, I hope, will evince, that they well understood the evidence for christianity, that they assert the miracles of the apostolic age, that they allege the prophecies in their natural and proper sense, and state the principal facts on which the truth of the gospel depends with simplicity and certainty. After the decline of the Roman learning, they are by far the best writers

of their respective times. That they acted wisely in refuting Paganism, in order to demonstrate the truth of the gospel, is evident, when we reflect that they addressed their apologies to men who considered all religions as compatible, and were disposed to form a friendly coalition between gentilism and a true revelation, by adopting both. To such, the true way of argument, was to prove that their own polytheism was an imposture, the destruction of which was essential to the establishment of the *only* true religion. This hath been clearly shewn by the incomparable author of the divine legation of Moses, II. 6. p. 52. ‘The not attending to the genius of
 ‘paganism hath misled some of the best critics into a very
 ‘lame judgment on the first apologists; who, they pretend,
 ‘have unskilfully managed, in employing all their pains to
 ‘evince what was so easy to be done, the fallshood of paga-
 ‘nism, rather than to prove the truth of their own religion.
 ‘For, say these critics, were paganism proved false, it did
 ‘not follow that christianity was true: but were the christian
 ‘religion proved true, it followed that the pagan was false.
 ‘But the mater was just otherwise; and the apologists acted
 ‘with much good judgment. The truth of christianity was
 ‘acknowledged by the pagans: they only wanted to have
 ‘the compliment returned. As this could not be done, there
 ‘was a necessity to assign the reasons of their refusal. And
 ‘this gave birth to so many confutations of idolatrous wor-
 ‘ship.’

II. P. 251.

Some writers have given the bright side of paganism, and treated this subject in the way of panegyric. Tobiaë Pfanneri *systema theologiæ gentilis purioris*. Basil. 1679, 4. and others mentioned by Walch. i. 746, 852. who observes the fallacy of such systems, which, though agreeable to the common notions of natural religion, have no foundation in the received opinions or practices of antiquity. Buddeus, *theolog. dogmatic.* p. 1025, preserves a due medium, and shews the shining truths of nature and morality buried under the rubbish of the popular superstition. ‘*Paucissimi tamen ad hæc rationis dictata attendebant. plerique contra, vitiorum sordibus immerfi,*
 ‘in

in summa securitate transigebant vitam, de peccatis, eorumque
expiatione, parum solliciti.

III. P. 251.

Of the eastern religions and books of authority, the following notices are subjoined, as a guide to farther researches into a subject so curious and interesting.

Of the Vedam, or sacred code of Indostan, in four parts, Brucker, H. C. P. t. v. p. 804. 831. vi. 976.

The Zend-avesta or Persian code, translated by Anquetil de Perron, Paris, 1771, 3 vols. 4to. Mr. Bryant, Analysis, III. 588—600, discovers in it evident traces of the Mosaic history of the origin of evil.

The Sadder published by Hyde, p. 312, is a compendium of the Zend-avesta. see Fabric. B. G. i. 252. Brucker, i. 179. vi. 63. 67, who cites 'Liste des mserr. qui dans Inde et dans le Kirman sont attribuez a Zoroastre, et des ouvrages qui ont rapport a la religion des Parsses. 1762.' See Mr. Gibbon's elegant abridgment of the doctrines of the Zend-avesta, ch. viii. he justly stiles 'the great and fundamental article of that system, the celebrated doctrine of the two principles, a bold and injudicious attempt of eastern philosophy, to reconcile the existence of moral and physical evil, with the attributes of a beneficent Creator and governor of the world.' It is evidently a perversion of the revealed doctrine, concerning the prince of the revolted angels, who is no other than the Persian Ahriman. At a time when the system of the two principles began to prevail in the east, the Jewish prophets combated the abuse, by denying the independency of the evil principle. Thus the sublime Isaiah, predicting the conquests of Cyrus: xlv. 5—7. 'I am the LORD, and there is none else: there is no God besides ME. I guided thee, though thou hast not known me. That they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me: I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the LORD do all these things.'

Of Confucius, Le Clerc. B. U. & H. VII. 332—390.

Barbeyrac. pref. sur Pufend. §. XV.

I believe the following reflection of Buddeus, in his *Analecta*, p. 350, to be very just. ‘Cum plerorumque apud nos animos hæc invaserit stultitia, ut peregrina admiremur, fastidiamus contra domestica, licet longe præstantiora; hinc Confucii sapientiam tot laudibus in cælum vehi videas: cum tamen ea quæ, in quibusvis libris catecheticis, pueris apud nos instillantur, longe meliora solidioraque sint, quam tota philosophia Confucii.’

IV. P. 252.

Of living manners, the late voyages to the south sea are sufficient evidences of the deplorable state of man without policy and without christianity. Captain Furneaux's narrative (in Cook's voyages towards the south pole, II. 256.) paints the shocking barbarity of the New Zealanders in 1773. ‘I still doubted their being cannibals. But we were soon convinced by most horrid and undeniable proof.’ The rest may be read in that faithful relation. The author of those voyages was not very attentive to the religion of the barbarians he visited: but his testimony is the more unexceptionable, as he had no system to support, and I think, has not once mentioned christianity in the whole four years of his perilous voyage. The wretched barbarians he describes, are either sunk into brutal voluptuousness or savage cruelty, and are universally ignorant and unprincipled; from the poor and diminutive race that shivers amidst eternal frosts on the Terra-del-fuego, to the inhabitant of the sultry regions of the great southern continent: Nor is their condition better in North-America. Gracious God! how various are thy dispensations! how merciful perhaps, in denying or withholding that light, the abuse of which is more criminal, than the vices of barbarism and ignorance! Among us, who enjoy its beams in its full lustre, how is it neglected, despised, and vilified! It shines in darkness, while our intellectual darkness will not receive it.

On the magnificent but opposite superstitions of Mexico and Peru, the reader will peruse the eloquent recital of Dr. Robertson,

Robertson, in his history of America, book IV, with the remarks. Such facts baffle all the reasonings of our polished philosophy, with respect to the religious capacity of man. ‘ Quod si Deus, neglecto humano genere, huic torrenti aggeres nullos opposuisset, jam suis vitiis confectam humanam vitam, in ferinam mutasset: quod factum videmus in gentibus aliquot barbaris, Africæ præsertim et Americæ, quæ jus nullum habent, nisi quod vis et arma præbent: et eo feritatis prolapsæ sunt, ut humanis carnibus quasi pecudum vesci, religioni non ducant; cæteraque omnia faciant, quæ libido legibus soluta suadet: nec numinis scelerum ultoris, et recte factorum remuneratoris, ullam sibi cognitionem reliquam fecerunt.’ Jo. Clerici, H. E. prolegom. p. 105.

Robertson, i. 388. ‘ The Americans allotted the highest place, in their country of spirits, to the skilful hunter, to the adventurous and successful warrior, to such as had surprized and slain the greatest number of enemies, who had tortured many of their captives, and devoured their flesh—They bury with them their bow, their arrows, and other weapons, used in hunting or war; they deposite in their tombs, the skins or stuffs of which they make garments, Indian corn, maniac, venison, domestic utensils—In some provinces, on the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favourites, and of his slaves, were put to death, and interred together with him!—Many of their retainers offer themselves as voluntary victims.’—

ii. 302. ‘ Religion was formed among the Mexicans into a regular system, with its complete train of priests, temples, victims, and festivals. The aspect of superstition in Mexico was gloomy and atrocious—its divinities were clothed with terror, and delighted in vengeance—Of all offerings, human sacrifices were deemed the most acceptable.—The manners of the people in the New World, who had made the greatest progress in the arts of policy, were the most ferocious; and the barbarity of some of their customs, exceeded even those of the savage state.’ See the notes 59. 61.

The argument for the truth of revelation, drawn from the gross delusions of idolatry, is in all respects conclusive. Those delusions were not the offspring of nature, but of human invention: and so far from being checked or corrected by the cultivation of reason, arts, or policy, they grew up and increased

increased with the refined science of antiquity; and were established by the philosophy and politics of Ægypt and Persia, of Greece and Rome, in fine, of all the most polished nations of Europe and Asia, no less than in the barbarous regions of Africa, and the nations of America, from the rude and savage Eskimaux and Natchez, to the magnificent and terrible idolatries of Mexico, Chili, and Peru. Survey the whole globe; the phantom of natural deism is no where to be found, but is the mere shadow of revelation in christian countries, and would with equal ingratitude and impiety, assume the honours of the substance whose truth it mimics.

V. P. 263.

The following account of the Eleusinian mysteries is extracted from Le Clerc's historic explanation of the fable of Ceres, in the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, t. vi. p. 47—109.

'If all that is said of Ceres was mere fiction, Isocrates in the opening of his elaborate panegyric, would not have vaunted the honour done to the Athenians by this queen, in teaching them agriculture and giving them the mysteries.

The most sacred mysteries were only representations of events that happened in the most remote ages. The mysteries of Mithra were called *μνημοσύνα*, memorials.

The name of a benefactor was given to the public feast in memory of benefits. Thus the Mutia in honour of Mutius Scævola, which Cicero calls 'honorem hominis, deorum religionem consecratum.' Sicily was governed by a queen named Déo, contemporary with the patriarch Abraham, A. M. 2000, and the Greeks gave her a place among their divinities, because she was the first in Europe who perfected agriculture. She taught the cultivation of wheat in her own fertile island, from whence the whole process of plowing, sowing, reaping, and making into bread, was conveyed to Greece and Italy. Hence she received the name of Demêter, mother of abundance. Her second benefit to society was policy and laws, the boundaries of lands, and property in the produce of labour.

Triptolemus

Triptolemus of Eleusis enacted three laws long observed in Attica, 1, to honour parents. 2, to offer only fruits to the gods. 3, Not to kill the animals employed in agriculture.

Dio had her residence in the centre of Sicily, near the irri-
guous hills of Enna, [en-naam, the fair-fountain.] Hence
her only daughter Pherephatta was carried away by some per-
sons concealed in a neighbouring cavern, who conducted her
in a chariot to Syracuse, and from thence to Epirus. Ceres
in seeking for her daughter, came to Eleusis, and in return
for her hospitable reception, taught her arts of agriculture and
legislation, to Celeus king of Eleusis and some others. Trip-
tolemus circulated these inventions round the coasts of Greece.
The Sicilians instituted a festival of ten days, in which they
represented the ancient manner of living, before Ceres taught
them agriculture. Diodor. v. 1—5.

The inhabitants of Attica consecrated to her four festivals,
viz,

1. The proërofra, before seed-time.
2. The thesmophoria, in memory of her legislation.
3. The aloa, or feast of the threshing floor.
4. The MYSTERIES OF DEO, celebrated in August, ascribed
by some to Erechtheus, who is said to have brought them from
Egypt, by some to Museus or Eumolpus his son, by others to
Orpheus. The subject of these mysteries was the celebration
of the invention of agriculture and the laws of Dêo.

These ceremonies were an engagement, to keep the laws
of Ceres, in the hope of being more happy than others in a
future life: and the initiated were taught, that the evils of
the present life were punishments of sins committed in a state
of pre-existence.

The proper *secret* of the mysteries was the true history of
Dêo and Pherephatta, that these goddesses were only deified
mortals. Cic. Tusc. i. 13. Ipsi illi majorum gentium dii qui
habentur, hinc a nobis profecti in cœlum reperientur. Quære
quorum demonstrantur sepulcra in Græcia: reminiscere, quo-
niam es initiatus, quæ tradantur mysterius; tum denique, quam
hoc late pateat intelliges.

The

The little mysteries were celebrated at a place of Attica, called Agra, not far from Athens, in the month of Anthesterion, or November; and were preparatory to the great mysteries. The aspirants came to Agra in March or April, sacrificed to Jupiter, and kept the skin of the victim to put it under their feet, when they purified themselves on the banks of the *Ilissus*. He who performed the ceremony, was called Udranos, because he poured water on the aspirants, who were obliged to keep themselves chaste.

After having undergone the formalities, the aspirant became a *mystes*, that is, in a state to be soon initiated at Eleusis, where he became *epoptes*, or inspector of the secret ceremonies. Before this, the *mystes* was permitted to go to Eleusis, and even to enter the vestibule of the temple of D  o; but could not enter the sanctuary, till after he was initiated, which did not take place till *five years* after the purification at Agra. Even then, the *Epopt  * did not inspect every part of the mysteries; some things were reserved for the priests alone.

When any one was initiated, he was directed to enter the temple of D  o in the night, crowned with myrtle, and washing his hands as he entered. He was informed, that, to reap the benefit of the mysteries, he ought to have clean hands, and a pure mind, and to understand well the Greek language. After this, they opened a coffer, made of two flat stones exactly joined, from whence they took the sacred books, in which were contained the laws and ceremonies of the mysteries. These were read to the aspirant, who was directed to transcribe them. This being done, the Hierophant asked him, if he had eaten any thing. All the candidates answered: 'I have fasted: I have drank the cyceon: I have taken from a coffer, I have put into a basket; I have put back again from the basket into the coffer.' This idle stuff was in memory of the repast, which Baubo gave to Ceres. The *myst  *, having been thus prepared, entered the sanctuary, the veil of which was drawn aside by a *prophetes*, and there at first they were struck with a profound darkness. Instantly, appeared a dazzling light, which shewed a beautiful statue of Ceres magnificently dressed. While the initiated had their eyes fixed on this statue, the light at once disappeared, and all was again enveloped in the deepest obscurity. This artificial day and night

night succeeded each other several times; and at certain intervals, nothing was heard but cries, and thunders, followed by flashes of lightning, which was seen falling in the midst of the sanctuary. Then appeared innumerable strange and monstrous figures, as of men with dogs' heads, and other mormos to affright the simple spectators. After having sufficiently scared them, all this horrible grimace vanished, and they perceived in open day, a charming meadow, where they went to dance, and to entertain themselves without fear, in conversing on what they had seen. This meadow probably was parted from the sanctuary, and inclosed with walls. The sanctuary opened all at once on the admission of the light, which formed a scene agreeably contrasted to the horrid darkness of the preceding night.

I omit the shocking indecencies of the mysteries, because, as St. Paul says, perhaps in allusion to the mysteries, 'it is a shame to speak of those things which were done of them in secret.' Whitby, and Doddridge, on Ephes. v. 12.

The hierophant dismissed the initiated by repeating the words *Κογξ, ομπαξ*, which are probably Phoenician, Kotz, Omphets, *ܕܢܐܝܢ* be vigilant, *ܕܢܐܝܢ*, Syr. be innocent.

The MINISTERS of the mysteries were,

The Hierophant or mystagogue, sometimes called prophetes. Even his name was not permitted to be told to the profane or uninitiated. He was to be an Athenian, of the family of the Eumolpidæ, of a certain age; even his voice, hair, and dress, were adjusted to the ritual. He held the office for life, and professed a perpetual chastity.

The Daduchus, or torch-bearer.

The sacred Herald.

The Minister of the altar, a youth, who implored the favour of the gods for all the initiated.

Five Commissaries who directed the whole ceremonial, namely, the King, and four Epimeletes.

Ten priests, to perform the sacrifices.

The profane, that is, the uninitiated, were excluded from the temple; and those who were sullied with great crimes were not permitted to be initiated.

The

The festival commenced on the 15th of Boedromion, or the beginning of September, and continued nine days, each of which had its peculiar office and appellation.

1. The first day was called *αγυρμος*, or the day of the assembly: and on this day, the ceremonies of initiation before described were performed.

2. *Αλαθε μυσταί*. 'Go, Mystæ, to the sea:' by which words the herald directed the mystæ to purify themselves in the water.

3. *μυλλος*, from the sacrifice of a mullet to Ceres.

4. *Χαίρε Διμήτερ* the acclamation of the women who followed the chariot drawn by oxen, in which was carried a basket of flowers, which was not to be looked upon but by the initiated.

5. The fifth night, the initiated walked through the city with flambeaux, to represent the search of Ceres after her daughter.

6. The sixth day, they conducted from Athens to Eleusis the statue of a young man crowned with myrtle, and carrying a flambeau in his right hand. They called him *Jacchos*, and gave the same appellation to the day itself. This statue (whether of Bacchus, or some one else, is uncertain) was attended from Athens to Eleusis with loud shouts, hymns, and dances; with branches of trees born in triumph.

7. The seventh day, gymnastic games were celebrated by naked combatants, and the conqueror had a quantity of barley for his prize. These were the most ancient games of Greece, and were celebrated in memory of the invention of agriculture.

8. The eighth day was employed in initiating those who had not been initiated the first day. It was called *Epidauria*, because Esculapius had arrived on that day from Epidaurus, to be initiated; and in his favour the Athenians had renewed the ceremony.

9. The ninth and last day was called *Plemochœ*, a name which denotes 'an earthen vessel flat at the bottom;' because on this day they filled with water two vessels of this form, one of which was placed at the east, the other at the west, after which, both were emptied, at the pronouncing of certain

tain mystical words, the import of which was, as Le Clerc conjectures, to pray for rain on the sown corn.

In this manner they celebrated the most august mysteries of paganism, in which most of the Greeks were initiated. Perhaps they were not originally so burdened with ceremonies. As instituted in memory of the laws and inventions of Ceres, they were as just and reasonable as any part of paganism. When abused by superstition, the best and greatest men neglected them entirely. Socrates would not be initiated; and Diogenes laughed at those, who thought that the meanest of the initiated would have the first places in the happy isles, while Epaminondas and Agesilaus, who had never been initiated, would be in mud and mire after death.

Permit me to offer such reflections as have occurred to me on the subject of the mysteries.

1. A first observation is founded on that of Le Clerc, that the *ceremonies* of the mysteries were augmented with time. They were originally a mere historic memorial. The first addition to them, was the representation of a future state, which was brought from Egypt, whose rites of sepulture furnished the Greeks with all their fabulous ideas on that subject. Tartarus and Elysium were represented in the mysteries, the one by the horrors of that dark nocturnal scene, the other by the Meadow enamelled with flowers, the *ἡλυσίων πεδίων* of Homer, the 'locos lætos et amœna vireta fortunatorum nemorum' of Virgil: who could not but paint the mystic shews, when he was describing Tartarus and Elysium: because both the poem and the mysteries had the same archetype, the Ægyptian doctrine of a future state. This doctrine was impressed on the people, in the gross detail of the Ægyptian legislators; in the visible emblematic shews of the Mysteries; and in Virgil's Epic, on the poet's plan of a consummate polity, established by Augustus, to which the people were to be attached by the ties of religion.

2. A second innovation was the *moral* turn given to the mysteries even in Cicero's time, and much earlier, who describes it by the idea of a *παλιγγενεσία*, or renovation to a better

ter life, with a hope of a happy immortality after death. This idea was added to the first principles of the mysteries, and was grafted on the natural wishes of the human mind, respecting a future state, and on the natural notions or instincts of conscience, respecting the necessity of a moral change or renovation, in order to be qualified for a happy immortality. This last idea of the *παλυνγυγισια*, grew up with christianity; and I am persuaded that the pagan priests and magistrates encouraged this notion in opposition to christianity, as if the mysteries could supply that which was the proper and peculiar efficacy of the christian religion, the restoration of order and true felicity to all parts of the human constitution, by re-instating conscience in its proper dominion. The mysteries pretended to effect this: Christianity really effected it, and does effect it. The pretences of the mysteries were contradicted by the extreme flagitiousness of most of the initiated. And christianity itself suffers in its noblest principle, 'the renewing of the mind,' by the abuses and follies of enthusiasm.

3. It is certain, from the testimony of Josephus and of St. Clement of Alexandria, that the hierophant taught the doctrine of the *unity* in the greater mysteries. Yet there is reason to believe, that this doctrine was not imparted to all the initiated, but only to select aspirants, men of eminence in literature or civil life: and that it was taught in such a manner, as to favour that atheistic pantheism, by which the learned gentiles chose to distinguish themselves from the vulgar polytheists. M. Aurelius, who was initiated A. D. 176 with the highest applause of the sanctity of his manners, appears in his writings a professed pantheist. Dio. lxxi. 31, Brucker. i. 597. vi. 394. Buddei analecta, p. 171—180.

4. The last observation I shall make on this subject, and for which alone I have entered into this detail, is that the mysteries formed a strong *obstacle* to christianity. They were the most ancient and respected part of the pagan devotion: It was extremely difficult to surmount the universal prejudice in their favour: the greatest and most virtuous of the emperors patronized them, gave them the sanction of their own example, and introduced them to Rome; where, and at Eleusis, they continued to be revered as long as paganism subsisted.

The original intention of the mysteries was merely historical and commemorative : afterwards their principal aim was to influence the morals of the people, though they debased their purpose by the mormos of superstition, the most inconsistent Profligacy, and the most immoral fanaticism.

The principle of the mysteries was to act upon the remorse of the human heart, and to favour the natural operations of conscience, aspiring to a state of moral happiness. In this view, it pretended to effect that moral change, which is the sublime privilege of the Christian Ethics. Cicero uses the very term, since consecrated by religion. *Alterius vitæ quoddam initium ordimur.*—*Amicorum litteræ me ad triumphum vocant, rem a nobis, ut ego arbitror, propter hanc παλιγγενεσίαν nostram, non negligendam.* ad Attic. iv. i. vi. 6. The whole scope of Apuleius's fable and of the adventures of Psyche, has been proved by the great person who first developed this subject, to relate to this moral change, and to recommend the mysteries as the best means of effecting it. But that very work of Apuleius is a demonstration of their inefficacy, being polluted like the mysteries themselves, with the most abominable superstitions and obscenities.

When christianity began to prevail, this moral end of the mysteries was warmly patronized by the Philosophers, while their corruptions were as warmly exposed by the Fathers. The result of that controversy was as singular, as it was pernicious. The Fathers adopted the language of the mysteries, and most incautiously applied it to the Christian worship, especially to baptism and the eucharist. See Casaub. in Baronii annales, exercit. xvi. §. 43. p. 478.

The Philosophers on their part dignified and refined the mysteries, by applying to them the sublime principles of christianity. It was the special artifice of the new platonism, to steal and disguise the noblest truths of christianity, and in those borrowed plumes to assert its own sufficiency. This might be shewn in numberless instances. As it relates to the mysteries, it is fully expressed in a remarkable passage of Theon Smyrnenus, a platonist of the second century. *Theonis Mathematica*, edit. Paris. 1644. 4. cap. i. *Philosophiam comparare possumus cum*

cum initiatione verorum sacrorum et traditione mysteriorum non fictorum. Initiationis vero quinque sunt partes; Prima, purgatio prævia: neque enim omnibus, etiam optantibus, mysteria impertiri fas est, sed sunt qui præconis voce submoventur: quales illi, qui manus impuras, vocemque inarticulatam habent; [for φωνή I would read φωνὴν ἀξυνετον, a secret homicide, alluding to the rejection of the emperor Nero from the mysteries.] illos vero, qui mysteriis non arcentur, necesse est purgationibus quibusdam ablui. Purgationem sequitur sacrorum traditio, id est initiatio. Tertia est quæ dicitur inspectio. Quarta vero, quæ finis est et scopus inspectionis, capitis religatio et coronarum impositio; ita ut quæ quis sacra acceperit, ea tradendi aliis capax reddatur, sive daduchiam, id est, facium gestationem; sive hierophantiam, id est, sacrorum interpretationem; aliudve quodlibet sacerdotium. Quinta vero, quæ ex istis exurgit, Deo charum esse, et potiri felicitate, quæ continetur consortio familiaris cum illo vitæ.

These five gradations are expressed in an ancient picture of the mysteries. Bellorii picturæ antiquæ cryptarum Romanarum, tabb. XI. XII.

VI. P. 258.

The curious reader may be amused with the absurdest comment that can be imagined on this fine passage, in Schultens on Job. xxxi. 26. he will smile at the 'prompta non minus quam venusta allegoria.' Le Clerc refutes this insipid allegory. This learned commentator has given a fine illustration of the second commandment. 'Cum aliorum omnium idololatrarum, tum singularem in modum Ægyptiorum, quibuscum vixerant Israelitæ, mores hic damnat et vetat Deus. Apud Ægyptios autem, sidera et aves, quæ sunt *supra in cælis*; simulacra hominum et brutorum, quæ *infra in terris*; pisces denique, qui sunt *in aqua terris subiecta*, colebantur' Diodor. i. p. 10. 12. Plut. de Iside. Herodot. II. 69. & passim. Triplicem Ægyptiorum idololatriam paucis verbis complexus est Philo, in libro de decalogo. 'ἀφ' ἑκατέρου γὰρ τῶν εἰς χρεσιν δοθέντων ἀνθρώποις ὑπὸ θεοῦ ΓΗΣ καὶ ΥΔΑΤΟΣ, διερευνησάμενοι τὰ ἀγχιότατα, οὐτε χρεσάσιον
λεον-

λεοντος θηριώδεστερον ανευρον, ουτε προκοδείλου των ενυδρων αγγιωτερον, α σεβουσι και τιμωσί. πολλα μεν τοι και αλλα ζωα, κυνας, αιλουρους, λυκους, ΠΙΘΗΝΑ ἰδαας κ' ἰερακας.—Videtur omnis illa idololatria orta esse ex fallace sacerdotum gente, quæ, ut augustiora sacra faceret, nihil aperte dicebat, sed sub symbolis abscondebat. Sic, cum Ofirin, agriculturæ deditum regem, symbolica juvenci imagine designassent, tandem ejus animum in bove Api esse crediderunt.

Of the invention of image-worship or of statues, Herodotus, II. 4. F. Junius, in catalogo artificum, p. 5.

Of Cneph, Shuckford's Connection, B. V. where the priority of theism to idolatry and multiplied gods, is clearly proved.

Of the Ægyptian theism, Lactantius, i. 6. speaking of the first Mercury: quintum fuisse eum, a quo occisus sit Argus, ob eamque causam in Ægyptum profugisse, atque Ægyptiis leges ac litteras tradidisse. Hunc Ægyptii Thoyth appellant. —Hic scripsit libros, et quidem multos, ad cognitionem rerum divinarum pertinentes, in quibus majestatem summi ac singularis Dei asserit.

VII. P. 259.

‘ There is not any writer, who describes in so lively a manner as Herodotus, the true genius of polytheism. The best commentary may be found in Mr. Hume's Natural History of Religion.’ Mr. G's. notes on Ch. II. n. 3. The misfortune is, that in that curious piece of Mr. Hume, the perspective is inverted, and polytheism is seen at the wrong end; not as a corruption of theism, which in truth and fact it was, but as the original creed gradually refined into something like the modern philosophy. But Mr. Hume was an unlucky builder of systems, both in religion and in history. So capricious are opinions not founded on facts, that others, perhaps not better intentioned, take the opposite part of the question: rightly, as it happens in this instance, for the interests of truth and religion. Mr. Spelman, in a note on his Dionysius, vol. III. p. 275. asserts from Lactantius, i. 6. that the Ægyptians were originally deists, and were taught the unity

unity in the writings of Thoth, who, says the annotator, 'lived
' at least a thousand, and no body knows *how many thou-*
' *sand* years before Moses, in whose time, as it appears from
' numberless passages in the pentateuch, the Ægyptians had
' exchanged the noble institutions of Thoth for a wretched
idolatry.' This question is decided in a masterly manner, in
the remarks on Mr. Hume's Natural History of Religion,
which were first published in 1757.

Herodotus, in Clio, c. 131, with the notes of Wesseling,
who cites the divine legation, B. II. sect. 1. sequ. where the
subject of idolatry is investigated with equal erudition and phi-
losophy.

Selden's treatise of the Syrian deities is the best comment
on those ample notices of the eastern idolatry preserved in
scripture. See Buddeus, H. E. i. 754.

VIII. P. 259.

Herodotus, i. 131. Pelloutier, too much attached to his
system, finds the Celtic religion in every part of the ancient
world. He derives the Persians from that stock. i. 31. and
gives proofs of their agreement in the common principle of
their rejecting temples, and pillaging or destroying them
whereever they carried their arms. B. i. c. 8. iii. 4. ix. 5.
It is well known, that Xerxes burned the Grecian temples:
Herodot. viii. 109. Pausanias, x. 35, observes, that the
Greeks would not rebuild them, that their ruins might record
to posterity the barbarity of that expedition.

IX. P. 261.

Polybius gives several treaties, ratified by the religion of
Carthage, iii. 22. vii. 2. The goddess Coelestis, or the moon,
was one of their principal deities. Virgo Coelestis, pluviarum
pollicitatrix. Tertull. apol. c. 23. In Jeremiah, vii. 18.
xlv. 17—25. it appears, that she was styled the queen of
heaven. Of the ἀνδρωποδυσια, καὶ τεκνοδυσια, consult the very
learned Mr. Bryant's observations, p. 267. On the divine
person

person of the Messiah in his prae-existent character, as the angel of the covenant, destroying the idolatry of Egypt and Phoenicia, compare Isaiah, li. 9. lxi. 12, with that wonderful strain of sublimity in the lxxviii Psalm.

X. P. 262.

The Grecian idolatry was first reduced to a system by the poet Hesiod. Herodotus, II. 53, οὗτοι δὲ εἰσὶν οἱ ποιησάντες θεογονίην Ἑλλήσι, καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπωνυμίας δόντες, τιμὰς τε καὶ τεχνὰς διαδοῦντες, καὶ εἶδεα αὐτῶν σημεῖα. His learned commentator, Wesseling, understands ποιησάντες, as if Homer and Hesiod were the first who made poems on the gods of Greece. But the passage itself refutes this interpretation, and asserts expressly, that these poets first imposed names on each of the gods, assigned them their functions and honours, and described their several forms. Poetry was from the most remote antiquity connected with religion. It was so inseparable an adjunct of paganism, that the principal deities had each a distinct species of poem consecrated to their worship. Theodoret. therap. iv. p. 67. μήτε τῇ Διοὶ τὸν ἰούλον ἀσώμει, ἢ λιτύει· σάν τῇ Ρέᾳ, μὴ Διονύσῳ τὸν διδυραμβόν, μὴ τῇ Πυθίᾳ μαντεί τοῦ παιᾶνα, μὴ τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι τὸν ὑποῖπον.

Among the Greeks, the hymns of Olen, Orpheus, Onomacritus, and those still extant of Homer, Callimachus, and Proclus, were sung at the altars. Pausanias, i. 22, mentions a genuine hymn of old Musæus in honour of Ceres. The Διόσκουροι of Theocritus is one of these hymns. Several of the admired poems of Horace were composed for sacred solemnities.

Casaubon. in Athenæum, lib. xiv. c. 3.

Fabricius. B. G. i. 17. 18. viii. p. 508.

Bp. Lowth. de sacra poesi. præf. xix. & xxix.

XI. P. 265.

Of the monstrous system of the Edda, one of the most portentous monuments of ancient superstition, consult

Northern Antiquities, vol. II.

Brucker. H. C. P. i. 313. vi. 155.

Biblioth. Germanique, xxvii. 38. xxix. 236.

Fabricius. bibliogr. antiqu. c. VIII. §. 16.

XII. P. 268.

That the papal corruptions of Christianity were derived from the Celtic conquerors of the western empire, hath been most ingeniously observed by Mosheim, in his Institutions, Sæc. V. p. 206. Sæc. VIII. p. 292. On the Conversion of the Northern nations to Christianity, see Fabricius, *lux salutaris Evangelii toti orbi exoriens.* capp. XV—XXIII. I have given this large extract from Cæsar, lib. VI. partly as it describes the Celtic establishment in the evangelic age, and principally as it is the very system which was afterwards the basis of the papal Imposture, which is no other than Christianity debased and paganized by Celtic superstitions.

XIII. P. 270.

Valerius Maximus, lib. i. § 1. *Majores nostri statas solennesque caerimonias, Pontificum scientia; bene gerendarum rerum auctoritates, Augurum observatione; Apollinis prædictiones, Vatum libris; portentorum depulsiones, Etrusca disciplina explicari voluerunt. Prisco etiam instituto, rebus divinis opera datur, cum aliquid commendandum est, Precatione: cum exoscendum, Voto: cum solvendum, Gratulatione: cum inquirendum vel extis vel sortibus, Impetrato: cum solenni ritu peragendam, Sacrificio: quo etiam Ostentorum ac Fulgurum denunciationes procurantur.*

This accurate summary of the Roman Religion is copied or improved from Cicero, de haruspicum responsis, c. ix, if that oration be genuine. See Dr. Markland's remarks on that oration, p. 337. Much of the Religion of ancient Rome seems to have been the result of the Italian climate, ever favourable to superstition; which seems no less congenial to its soil and temperature, than lightnings, thunders, meteors, earthquakes, and volcanoes. As these phænomena are naturally terrifying, superstition takes the alarm; and the augurs had full scope, to direct these physical appearances to the purposes of the State. The prodigies recorded by Livy are so far from being censurable in that great historian, that they are an essential part of the Roman History. Among the fragments of Varro, are several on the subject of Religion

Religion, Antiquitatum rerum divinarum libri XVI. ad C. Cæsarem, Pontificem Maximum,—de Cultu Deorum—Augurum libri— In these works were included the most interesting topics: de pontificibus, auguribus, quindecimviris; de sacellis, sacris ædibus, locis religiosis; de feriis, ludis, circensibus, scenicis; de consecrationibus; de sacris privatis et publicis; de diis certis, incertis, selectis; &c.

XIV. P. 272.

The late excellent Archbishop Secker, in his lecture on the IVth Commandment, prefers Plutarch's authority in this instance to that of Dionysius, and confirms it by the authority of Varro in St. Augustine, de C. D. IV. 31. Dicit etiam, antiquos Romanos plusquam annos centum et septuaginta deos sine simulacro coluisse. Quod si adhuc, inquit, mansisset, castius dii observarentur. Cujus sententiæ suæ testem adhibet inter cætera etiam gentem Judæam.

Hero-worship was the prevailing idolatry of Rome in later times: this worship of deified men is implied in their representation by Statues. This idolatry was strengthened in all its forms by a fixed Establishment and a free Toleration. See Fresnoy on History. diss. VI. p. 68. Of the Roman Religion, Budæus, H. E. ii. 534. 857.

XV. P. 273.

Livy, xl. 29. In altera arca duo fasces candelis involuti septenos habuere libros, non integros modo, sed recentissima specie. septem latini de jure pontificio erant: septem græci de disciplina sapientiæ, quæ illius ætatis esse potuit. Compare Plutarch, in Numa, prope fin. Plin. H. N. xiii. 27. Val. Max. I. i. 12. Noluerint enim prisci viri quicquam in hac usservari civitate, quo animi hominum a deorum cultu avocarentur. Lactantius I. 22. Augustin. C. D. vii. 34. Beaufort. i. p. 143. Dr. Bentley. diss. on Phalaris, p. 374, edit. 1777, shews the absurdity of this story, without affecting the consequence that follows from it, respecting the change of the Roman religion.

XVI. P. 273.

Pelloutier, III. 3. p. 36. Ils adoroient des dieux spirituels, ils ne vouloient pas qu'on representat la divinité sous une forme corporelle—he cites Tacit. M. G. cap. 9. whom it is a pleasure to transcribe. Nec cohibere parietibus deos, neque in ullam humani oris speciem assimilare, ex magnitudine coelestium arbitrantur: lucos ac nemora consecrant, deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident. Lipsius has made very curious observations on Tacitus's account of the Celtic religion. The 'secretum illud' of Tacitus was the most retired part of the sacred forest, to which they gave the name of the deity whose sanctuary it was. Claudian, de laudib. Stilich. I. 227.

Ut procul Hercyniæ per vasta silentia sylvæ

Venari tuto liceat; lucosque vetusta

Relligione truces, et robora numinis instar

Barbarici, nostræ feriant impune bipennes.

XVII. P. 277.

Of the Capitol, consult Livy, i. 55. who styles Numa's capitol, veteris capitolii humilia tecta.

Plutarch. in Poplicola. Tacit. hist. III. 72, &c.

Justi Rycquii de Capitolio Romano Commentarius, Lugd. Batav. 1669. 1696. 12. Other great cities had their capitols. Rycqu. c. 46. 47. Montfaucon. II. 116. La maison quarrée de Nîmes—etoit un Temple—et une Capitole. M. Spon convient, que dans le moien et le bas age il peut avoir servi de maison de ville, ou s'assembloient les consuls de Nîmes—Aureste, Spon porroit bien se tromper, lorsqu'il soutient, qu'il n'y avoient d'autre capitol au monde, que celui de Rome. Toulouse en avoit certainement un.

When Jerusalem was rebuilt by Hadrian, he called it Ælia Capitolina, from its capitol the temple of Jupiter. Dio. lxi. 12. These magnificent structures may be stiled the citadels of gentilism.

'The capitol was a fortress on the Tarpeian rock. It included sixty temples, the principal of which was dedicated to Jupiter. The ruins and foundations of the ancient capitol are

are still to be seen in the water, beyond the bridge of St. Angelo. After being four times burned down, it was rebuilt by Boniface VIII. about the year mccc, and this is the present campidoglio, built on the ruins and foundations of the ancient capitol.' Sanadon, on Hor. l. III. Ode 3.

XVIII. P. 283.

Dionysius, xi 44. *υπερ των Ρωμαϊκων νομων, ους εν ταίς δωδیکا δελτοις αναγεγραμμενους ευρομεν, ουτε μηδενα ποιησασθαι λογον ηρμεσεν, ουτω σεμνων οντων, και τοσαυτην νχοντων διαφοραν παρα τας Ελληνικας νομοθεσίας.*—p. 725.

Liv. III. 34. Centuriatis comitiis decem tabularum leges perlatae sunt: qui nunc quoque, in hoc immenso aliarum super alias acervatarum legum cumulo, fons omnis publici privatiq; juris est.

Cic. i. 44. bibliothecas omnium philosophorum unus mihi videtur xii tabularum libellus, si quid [quis] legum fontes et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere et utilitatis ubertate superare.

Gellius. xx. i.

Gravina. Orig. jar. Civ. i. 31. et lib. II. praesertim cap. 76, de jure sacro. 'Antequam singulas explicemus, pro-
'dere constituimus aliqua priscae superstitionis exordia: tum,
'ut legum capita magis illustremus; tum, ut hinc etiam ostendamus, quantis ex erroribus, Dei et Filii sui Jesu Christi beneficio erepserimus.' This excellent lawyer deduces the popular polytheism from the human passions being turned into divinities: ambition was adored under the name of Jupiter: war, became Mars—the arts, Minerva—pride, a Juno—navigation, Neptune—Pluto, death. By the same process, hope, labour, sickness, and every thing incident to humanity, were converted into deities. This principle is agreeable to that strong expression of the nature of superstition, Psalm, l. 21. 'Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself.' Unde sibi homines singuli constituebant suarum simulacra cupiditatum, et affectionum humanarum, quae pro numinibus colerent. This hypothesis is very rational, and does not exclude the historic original of those gods of antiquity, who were

were deified mortals, and were deified with all their characteristic vices.

Gravina. i. p. 354. Quas multi de Ciceronis libris, tanquam de legum xii tabularum corpore sumserunt—pleraeque ab ipsomet Cicerone confectae, ut perfecta civilis juris forma illinc exhiberetur. See p. 404. Spelman, on Dionysius. iv. 336.

Cicero's naturalism is clearly expressed in the proëm to his laws. 'Cumque omnia, quae rationem habent, praestent iis, quae sint rationis expertia; nefasque sit dicere, ullam rem praestare NATURÆ omnium rerum; rationem inesse IN EA consitendum est.' Il. 7.

XIX. P. 289.

Two imaginary deities were well suited to impress the Roman people with veneration for their government, and attachment to their country. These deities were Rome and the Senate. The imperial city was adored as a goddess: and had a mystic name, to which perhaps S. John alludes in the apocalypse, xvii. 5. and which was so concealed, that the inquisitive Pliny could not or would not divulge it. H. N. III. 9. Roma ipsa, cujus nomen alterum dicere arcanis cerimoniarum nefas habetur—and c. 5. Romae tria nomina, vulgatum, arcanum, sacrificiis dedicatum. Bayle. artic. Soranus. note C.—Prudentius, c. Symm. i. 219.

Delubrum Romae; colitur nam sanguine et ipsa

More Deae—

The worship of Rome, as a goddess, had been established in the conquered provinces, even before the destruction of Carthage. Livy. xlii. 6. Tacit. Ann. iv. 56.

The places where the senate assembled, were considered as temples, though devoted to no other deity than that of the senate itself.

Spanheim. de U. et P. Numism. i. 139.

Reimar. on Dio. p. 1236.

XX. P. 291.

The growth of the gentile establishment in ancient Rome, may be traced to a few leading causes: 1. When they undertook the conquest of a city or territory, they first evoked the hostile gods to desert the enemy, and be propitious to the invaders. 2. On any superstitious panic, they invited the foreign deities to Rome, and sent formal embassies for this purpose. 3. Foreign deities were clandestinely introduced by strangers resident at Rome, and in the provinces. 4. Many strange religions were introduced by the caprice of the emperors.

Of the Evocation, see Macrobius, III. 9.

Of the Invitation, Livy, v. 21. vi. 29. xxix. 14. Plin. H. N. xxviii. 2. Plutarchus, voc. Deus, p. 653

XXI. P. 293.

Of the magnificence of the heathen temples, see Adams's Architecture, No. 4. This was what so captivated mankind to the gentile religions: and to wean his people from this essential foible of paganism, the Deity indulged the Jews in a temple by far the most splendid of any in that age: it being the plan of the theocracy, to gratify the innocent or tolerable propensities of His people, the better to wean them from such as were connected with idolatry. See Theodoret, therap. vii. p. 105. Of the Jewish temple, Josephus, viii. 3. gives a magnificent description, which has an effect like that of the temple itself—
 ὥστε στίλβειν ἀπαντὰ τοῦ ναοῦ, καὶ περικλυθεῖν τὰς ὀφείας ὑπὸ τῆς αὐγῆς τοῦ χρυσοῦ πανταχοῦ φερόμενης.

Of the temple of the Olympian Jupiter, begun by Pisistratus, and finished so late as by the emperor Hadrian, with the gymnasium and library, consult Pausanias, i. 18. Prideaux on the Arundel marbles, epoch iv. p. 118—120, computes the expence of this temple at 8000 talents, equal to 96 millions sterling. It is unnecessary to dwell on the description of other temples; but this was the capitol of Greece, and the most stupendous monument of her religious establishment. Pliny, H. N.

H. N. xxxvi. 14, affirms that all Asia was employed 220 years in building and embellishing the Ephesian temple.

XXII. P. 295.

An infinite number of anecdotes might be collected on the opulence of the ancient temples: and the consequent attachment of all ranks to a religion that involved in it their private fortunes and the public credit, must have been a great obstacle to christianity.

The temple of Diana at Ephesus was a bank for money.

Nos apud Theotimum omne aurum deposuimus,
Qui illic sacerdos est Dianæ Ephesiæ.

Plautus. Bacchid. II. 3. v. 72.

Money was securer in the temples, than in private hands, as men abhor sacrilege more than simple theft. Herodian i. 45. tells us, that many families were ruined, whose fortunes were deposited in the temple of Peace, when that superb structure was burned down in the reign of Commodus.

Of this temple, see Reimar on Dio. lxvi. 15.

Of the temple of Delphi, Herodotus, i. 50—55. Pausanias, x.

Of Cyprus, and of Pessimus; Morabin, hist. de Ciceron. pag. 265—267.

Of the temple of Saturn, the Roman exchequer, Fabricius on Dio. xli. 16.

Legacies were left to the gods in mortmain, and without restriction. Fabricius on Dio, lv. 2, cites a dissertation, de diis hæredibus ex testamento apud Romanos.

XXIII. P. 295.

Of the Greek religion, Fabricius in his bibliographia ant. p. 69. Joannis Potteri archæologia græca, Anglicé, Oxon.

1699

1669. 8. latine locupletior, Lugd. Batavor. 1702 fol. quæ editio tomo xii Thesauri Gronoviani est adjuncta. Secunda editio Anglica, quarta parte auctior, lucem vidit Oxonii, 1706. 8. 2 voll. Latina versio, duplo auctior editione Anglicana, Venetiis 1734. 4. duobus voluminibus est recusa.

Lamb. Bos. Antiquitatum atticarum descriptio brevis, Lipsiæ. 1749. 8.

Sigeb. Havercampus. Antt. Græcar. Lugd. 1740. 8.

Chr. Bruningii. Antt. Sacrae Graecorum, Francf. 1745. 8.

J. Alb. Steinhoferi Graecia sacra. Tubingae. 1734. 8.

J. G. Lakemacheri Antt. graecorum sacrae. Helm. 1734. 8.

Dissert. sur les ministres de la religion a Athenes, in Memm. de l'Acad. des inscr. tom. xviii. edit. Paris.

XXIV. P. 297—299.

Livy. xxxiii. 44. ad A. U. 554. Magnum certamen cum omnibus sacerdotibus eo anno fuit quaestoribus urbanis.—Quaestores ab auguribus [et] pontificibus, quod stipendium per bellum non contulissent, petebant. Ab sacerdotibus tribuni nequicquam appellati; omniumque annorum, per quos non dederant, exactum est.

Ibid. c. 46. Consules—ver sacrum ex pontificum jussu fecere—annis post uno ac viginti factum est, quam votum.

Theodosius the Great, among other methods of suppressing paganism, alienated its revenues, which were all transferred to the exchequer. S. Basnage, ad A. 392. n. vii. et ad A. 426. n. xi.

Of the victims, Dionysius, iii. 1. Josephus, de B. J. vi. 9. §. 3. Plin. l. x. ep. 97. St. John, ii. 13—17. Matth. xxi. 10—13. Mark. xi. 15—17.

Of statues, Polybius. p. 338. 340. edit. Casaub.

Augustus coined money of the statues of gold and silver; except such as he dedicated in the temples of Apollo, of Peace, and of Concord. Suet. Aug. c. 25. Mæcenus advised him, to decline this species of flattery to himself, as very expensive, and conveying no true honour; while virtue only could make him resemble the gods: *Χειροποιήτος δούδεις πάντοτε θεός ἵκεν*. Dio. l. 35.

Of

Of Socrates, Pausanias, i. 22. This author, and Pliny, H. N. xxxiv. abound with instances of the application of painting and sculpture to religion. A long catalogue of artists is given by Junius, annexed to his learned treatise, *de pictura veterum*, Roterod. 1694. f.

XXV. P. 298.

On occasion of the ceremonies for averting the omens of the civil war, Lucan describes a procession of all the religious orders of ancient Rome. i. 1016, of Mr. Rowe's translation.

The sovereign *Priests* the long procession lead,
Inferior orders in the train succeed,
Arrayed all duly in the Gabine weed. }

There the chaste head of *Vesta's* choir appears,
A sacred fillet binds her rev'rend hairs;
To her, in sole pre-eminence, is due,
Phrygian Minerva's awful shrine to view.

Next *the fifteen* in order pass along,
Who guard the fatal Sybil's sacred song:

To Almon's stream Cybele's form they bear,
And wash the goddess each returning year.

The *Titian* brotherhood; the *augurs'* band,
Observing flights on the left lucky hand.

The *Seven*, ordain'd Jove's holy feast to deck;
The *Salii* blithe, with bucklers on the neck;

All, marching in their order just, appear:

And last, the generous *Flamens* close the rear.

There were four principal colleges of the Roman priesthood: the pontifs, augurs, quindecimvirs, and septemvirs. To these was added a fifth college under the emperors, the *Sodales Augustales*. See M. de Beaufort, l. 3. who gives a learned detail of the religious orders—The *Rex et Regina Sacrorum*—the *Pontifex Maximus*—the *Pontifices Minores*—*Augurs*—*Aruspices*—*Quindecimviri*—*Epulones*—*Fratres Arvale*

vales—Titienſes—Auguſtales—Salii—Lupercales—Feciales—Curiones—xv Flamines—vi Veſtales—Tibicines, and attendants.

The mind cannot conceive a more difficult and ſeemingly impracticable enterprize, than the total change of the religion of the Roman empire, thus eſtabliſhed.

XXVI. P. 300.

The ſtatues of the Ægyptian and other deities are collected in Montfaucon, tomes I. II. The Iſiac table, II. 331, includes moſt of the Ægyptian ſuperſtitious. The ſtudy of antiquities would almoſt perſuade one to be a chriſtian. The Olympian Jupiter, the work of Phidias, deſcribed at large by Pauſanias, V. 11. was ſeated on a throne of gold and ivory, and in that poſture almoſt touched the roof of a very lofty temple. Junius, in Catalogo, p. 154. The Minerva of the ſame artiſt was ſo coſtly, that the ſecreting part of the materials is ſaid to have occaſioned the Peloponneſian war. Diodorus, xii. 39. The paſſion for ſtatues is as great in papal as in pagan Rome. It was not unuſual to put new heads on old ſtatues of great artiſts; and Cicero ſomewhere with great delicacy declines an honour of this kind, which was offered him at Athens. Popery is not ſo delicate. ‘In the cathedral of Rome a brazen St. Peter is ſeen, which formerly was a ſtatue of Jupiter, and in whoſe hands the keys were put inſtead of the thunderbolt.’ Dubourdien of the Theb. Leg. p. 65.

Sculpture was brought to perfection by Phidias, Polycletus, Lyſippus, Myron, Praxiteles, Scopas: painting by Echion, Nicomachus, Protogenes, Apelles, Ariſtides. Theſe great artiſts flouriſhed from the time of Pericles to that of Alexander; and they filled the world, with thoſe beautiful forms of the gods, which made polytheiſm ſo captivating, that Prudentius juſtly ſtiles the artiſts. ‘Fabri deorum vel parentes Numinum, and their art itſelf, Ars ſeminandis efficax erroribus.’

The ancient empires, in the prophecy of Daniel, on account of their idolatrous propenſity, were graphically deſcribed as an image or colossal ſtatue, which ſhould be thrown down by a ſmall ſtone, cut out without hands; and the ſtone that ſmote the image ſhould become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. Dan. ii. 35—45.

Of

XXVII. P. 302.

Of the gentile devotions, consult M. de Beaufort. i. ch. 4. "Cicero, N. D. III. 36, delivering the sentiments of ancient wisdom on this matter, expresses himself to this effect: All the commodities of life, says he, are the gift of heaven; but virtue no man ever yet thought came from God. For who ever returned him thanks, that he was good and honest? And why should he? For virtue is, of right, our own praise, and that in which man reasonably GLORIES. This in short is the opinion of all the world, that the goods of fortune are to be asked of heaven; but that wisdom is to be had only from ourselves." Bp. Warburton, Serm. VIII. p. 314. *propter virtutem enim, says the arrogant sage, laudamur, et IN VIRTUTE RECTE GLORIAMUR. Quod non contingeret, si id DONUM A DEO, non a nobis, haberemus.*—Judicium hoc omnium mortalium est, fortunam a Deo petendam, a SEIPSO sumendam esse SAPIENTIAM. Perſus, who was deeply tinctured with stoicism, instead of seeking it there *brings* with him to the temples that exalted virtue which he so well describes.

Compositum jus fasque animi sanctosque recessus

Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto:

Hæc cedo, ut admoveam templis—

A soul, where settled virtue reigns enshrin'd:

Where justice dwells, with sanctity combin'd;

Within whose inmost close recesses lie

Tinctures of generous honour's deepest dye.

BREWSTER.

Bibliothèque Britannique, tom. I. artic. vii. Lettre de M. L'ENFANT, pour prouver contre M. Bayle, que les payens croyoient, qu'il falloit demander, la sagesse aux dieux. I could add some authorities in support of the opinion I have expressed, p. 303, but this important subject deserves a more exact enquiry.

See the prayer of Scipio, in Livy, xxix. 37. and his character, xxvi. 19.

Justin.

XXVIII. P. 304.

Justin. hist. xlii. 3. Jasoni totus ferme oriens, ut conditori, divinos honores templaque constituit: quæ Parmenion, dux Alexandri Magni, post multos annos dirui jussit, ne cujusquam nomen in oriente venerabilius, quam Alexandri esset. Of the Jäfoneia, or temples of Jason, consult Strabo, I. p. 46. XI. p. 531. and Tacit. vi. 34.

Of the apotheosis of Hephæstion, see Diodorus, p. 251, and Lucian, de calumnia.

Of Callisthenes, Arrian. IV. p. 263. Curtius. VIII. 5.

Of Brasidas. Thucydides, V. p. 350.

Of Antigonus and Demetrius, Plutarch in Demetr.

Of Mithridates, Cicero, pro Flacco. c. 25. Mithridatem, deum illum patrem, illum conservatorem Asiæ, illum Euium, Nysum, Bacchum, Liberum, nominabant.

Of the tomb of Pompey, Appian. Civ. II. 481.

On the proconsular apotheosis, I have done little more, than to abridge the elegant and learned dissertation of M. Mongault, in the first volume of the memoirs of the academy of inscriptions. I adopt his apology for these disquisitions.

‘ Les erreurs et les egaremens des hommes, qui tiennent une si grande place dans l’histoire, ne doivent pas être le moindre objet de notre attention et de nos recherches. Ils servent a faire voire jusqu’ ou l’esprit humain se laisse mener, lorsqu’il n’est pas conduit par LA VERITABLE LUMIERE.’

Theocritus describes the apotheosis of Ptolemy, idyll. xvii.

The Achæans deified Aratus. Θυσίας αὐτῷ καὶ τιμὰς ἡρώωνας ἐνπρωταί.

Theodoret in his therapeutics, iii. p. 47, mentions a singularity, not to be paralleled but in the Lamas of Tartary, of whom see Mosheim, hist. eccles. Tartarorum, p. 133, seq.

‘ Porphyry asserts, that in the village of Anabi the Egyptians worshipped a living man, and sacrificed to him on an altar; after which, they set before him his usual food.’

Of the Mutia, Val. Max. viii. 15. 6. Asconius, p. 87. 117. Cicero, Verrin. II. 21, touches on several of these proconsular deifications. ‘ Istius imperio, Syracusis *Marcellæ* tolluntur, maximo gemitu luctuque civitatis: quem illi diem festum, cum recentibus beneficiis M. Marcelli debitum reddebant, tum generi, nomini, familiæ Marcellorum maxima voluntate

‘ voluntate tribuebant. Mithridates in Asia, cum eam pro-
 ‘ vinciam totam occupasset, *Mucia* non sustulit, hostis, et
 ‘ hostis in ceteris rebus nimis ferus et immanis, tamen hono-
 ‘ rem hominis, deorum religione consecratum, violare noluit.
 ‘ Tu Syracusanis unum diem festum Marcellis impartire nolu-
 ‘ isti, per quos illi adepti sunt, ut ceteros dies festos agitare
 ‘ possent. At vero præclarum diem illis reposuisti, *Verrea*
 ‘ ut agerent; et ut ad eum diem, quæ sacris epulisque opus
 ‘ essent, in complures annos locarentur. — O *Verrea* præcla-
 ‘ ra, &c.’

Cic. ad Attic. v. 21. Nullos honores mihi, nisi verborum,
 decerni sino: statuas, fana, τερπιννα, prohibeo.

Ad Quint. Fr. i. c. 9. which I cite in english: ‘ When the
 ‘ states of Asia had decreed monies for the purpose of erecting a
 ‘ temple and monument to my honour, as a voluntary expression
 ‘ of gratitude for my general services to the republic, and for
 ‘ your special merits to your province; and when the laws of
 ‘ restitution specified this exception, that money might be taken
 ‘ for the erecting of a temple or monument;—yet I judged it
 ‘ best to decline this honour though great in itself, though
 ‘ legal, though voluntary.’ A temple was a gentile church,
 with a fixed endowment for priests and sacrifices: to worship—
 what? a man, dead, or even living. Oh nature, blush!
 Oh reason, be a convert to that true Faith, which alone hath
 banished superstition!

XXIX. P. 334. &c.

It is a judicious as well as pious reflection of Tillemont. art.
 17. honneurs sacrileges rendus a Auguste. ‘ Le demon s’effor-
 ‘ coit ainsi d’augmenter l’idolatrie, de la relever par tout le
 ‘ faste de la majesté imperiale, et de l’appuyer par toute la
 ‘ puissance du nom Romain.’

Polyb. IV. 62. 67. V. 9. 12.

Livy. xxxi. 25. 26. Exornata eo genere operum eximiæ ter-
 ra Attica, et copia domestici marmoris, et ingeniis artificum,
 præbuit huic furori materiam: neque enim diruere modo ipsa
 templa, ac simulacra evertere satis habuit, &c.

Of the union of the pontifical and imperial titles, Dio. p.
 696. 712. Fabric. B. A. p. 637, who cites J. C. Happa-
 chius, de theologia civili vett. Romanorum, 1749. 4.

Of the higher pontifs, Noris. Cenot. Pis. i. 5. 6.

Matth. Brouerius a Niedick, de adorationibus Vett. popu-
 lorum

lorum. Traj. 1711. 8. cited by Mosheim, de Reb. Chr. p. 8, who observes from Philo, de Cherubim, the profligacy of the gentile festivals. On the morality of the ancient religions, Mosh. p. 14, cites Plato, de Rep. p. 430. de Legg. p. 776. Isocrat. encom. Busiridis. and observes, sect. 25, that the Epicureans were very numerous.

On the mysteries. p. 10. and his latin translation of Cudworth, i. 329. 415. ii. 1049. Clarkson, of liturgies. sect. iv.

Cicero. N. D. III. 27. Sentit domus uniuscujusque, sentit forum, sentit curia, campus, focil, provinciæ, ut quemadmodum ratione recte fiat, sic ratione peccetur: alterumque et a paucis et raro, alterum et semper et a plurimis.

The victory over gentilism is one argument, which demonstrates with a just and legitimate moral evidence the divine pretensions of christianity.

Et dubitamus adhuc, Romam tibi, Christe, dicatam
In leges transisse tuas? omnique volentem
Cum populo, et summis cum civibus, ardua magni
Jam super astra poli terrenum extendere regnum?

Prudentius, c. Symm. i. 588.

The poet elegantly alludes to that noble prophecy, the cxth Psalm.

XXX. P. 304.

Athenæus, lib. vi. pag. 253. edit. 1597, from Demochares, relates that the Athenians erected temples to two courtezans of Demetrius Poliorcetes, under the style of Leæna Venus, et Lamia Venus. When that prince appeared in person at Athens, the Athenians paid him all the divine honours, and sung, that he was the only *real* god, all the rest of the immortals were fast asleep, or on a journey, or mere non-entities. Ως ειη μόνος θεος αληθινος, οι δ' αλλοι καθευδουσιν, η αποδημουσιν, η ουκ εισιν. The poem itself, as preserved in Athenæus, and corrected by Casaubon, is in the following strain of impious adulation. Demetrius Poliorcetes, the son of Antigonus, expelled Demetrius Phalereus, and restored the liberty of Athens, in the second year of the cxviiiith Olympiad. Diod. l. xx. Plutarch. in Demetr.

The pæan was peculiar to Apollo, the ithyphallic to Bacchus; the latter, the more sacred of the two, was sung before Demetrius.

ΞΕΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ.

[Νυν δὲ μεγίστην χαρμονὴν χαιρεῖν χρέων
Νυν χρέων χορεύειν.]

Ὡς οἱ μέγιστοι τῶν θεῶν καὶ φίλτατοι
τῇ πόλει παρῆσι.

Ενταῦθα γὰρ Δημήτραν ἰδὲ Δημήτριον
Ἄμὰ παρίστα ὁ καιρὸς.

Χ' ἢ μὲν ταῖς σέμναις τῆς Κόρης μυστηρίαις
Ἐρχεῖθ' ἵνα ποιήσῃ.

Ὁ δ' ἱλαρὸς, ὥσπερ τὸν θεὸν δεῖ, καὶ καλὸς,
καὶ γέλων παρῆσι.

Σέμνος ὅθι φαίνοινθ' οἱ φίλοι πάντες κυκλῶ,
ἐν μέσοισι δ' αὐτός.

Ὅμοιος ὥσπερ εἰ οἱ φίλοι μὲν ἀσέρες,
Ἥλιος δ' ἐκεῖνος.

Ὡς κρατίζει παῖ Ποσειδῶνος θεοῦ,
καὶ θεᾶς Ἀφροδίτης!

Ἄλλοι μὲν ἢ μακρὰν γὰρ ἀπτεχούσι θεοί,
Ἡ δὲ ἔχουσιν ὠται,

Ἡ οὐκ εἰσὶν, ἢ δὲ προσεχούσιν ἡμῖν ἔδῃ ἐν
σε δε παρόνθ' ὄρωμεν,

οὐ ξυλινόν, ἔδῃ λιθινόν, ἀλλ' ἀληθινόν.
Εὐχόμεσθα δὲ σοι.

Πρωτὸν μὲν εἰρήνην ποιήσον, φίλτατε,
κύριος γὰρ εἰ σύ.

τὴν δ' ἔχει Θηβῶν ἀλλ' ὅλης τῆς Ἑλλάδος
Σφγγὰ περικρατῆσαν

Αἰτωλίδ', ὅς τις ἐπὶ πέτραις καθήμενος
Ὡσπερ ἡ παλαιὰ,

τα σῶμαθ' ἡμῶν πάντ' ἀναρπάσσας φέρει,
Κ' οὐκ ἔχω μαχεσθῆναι.

Αἰτωλικὸν γὰρ ἀρπάσσαι ταῖς τῶν πελάγας.
Νυν δὲ καὶ ταῖς πορρω.

Μαλιστα μὲν δὲ σχολάσων αὐτός. εἰ δὲ μὴ
Οἰδίπῳ τιν εὐρῇ,

τὴν σφίγγα ταυτὴν ὅστις ἡ κατακρημνίει,
Ἡ πεινὴν ποιήσει.

THE VISIT OF CERES AND DEMETRIUS TO THE
ATHENIANS.

Now let our joys exulting rend the sky,
With dances earth rebound.

The greatest, most belov'd of all the gods
To Athens now descend.

Hither in happy time at once repair
Great Ceres and Demetrius.

She comes to solemnize the mysteries
Of her belov'd Proserpina :

He fair and genial, as becomes a god,
Adorn'd in smiles appears.

His friends like stars shine with inferiour light,
Himself the radiant sun.

Hail! son of Neptune mightiest of th' immortals,
And of the sea-born Venus.

Surely the other gods desert their charge,
And have not ears to hear,

Or not exist, or not at all regard us :

Thee present we behold,
Not wood or stone, but true divinity ;

To thee we make our prayer.

First, dearest, most propitious of the gods,
(Thou art our lord) give peace.

Destroy th' Ætolian Sphinx *, not of Thebes only,
But of all Greece the pest,

Who, sitting on a rock, like her of old
Devours our hapless sons.

It is Ætolia's genius to invade

The rights of Greece resistless.

Yourself then give us rest : if not, O send

Some Oedipus victorious,

Who from its rock may dash the hated Sphinx

To merited destruction.

* Cassander, or Demetrius Phalereus, who had fortified himself in the
citadel of Athens.

Athenæus has a spirited observation on the gross flattery of the Athenians, expressed in this poem: ταυτ' ἔδον ἃ Μαράθω-
νομαχοί, οὐ δημοσίᾳ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατ' οἰκίαν· ὃι τὸν προσκυνή-
σαντα τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεῖα ἀποκτείναντες· οἱ τὰς ἀνηίδμοις μυριάδας
τῶν βαρβάρων φονεύσαντες.—τοιοῦτοι τοὶ ἐγένοντο ὅι Ἀθηναῖοι, κολακεί-
ας, θηρίου χαλεπωτάτου, λυσσαν ἐμβάλουσης αὐτῶν τῇ πόλει. p. 254.

XXXII. P. 331. &c.

The Piratic war A. U. DCLXXXVI. was destructive to the temples. Cicero intimates this, when speaking of an ancient temple of Juno; quod tanta religione semper fuit, ut non modo illis Punicis bellis, quæ in his fere locis navali copia gesta atque versata sunt, sed etiam in hac prædonum multitudine semper inviolatum, sanctumque fuerit.' in Verrem. IV. 46.

Ἐπιφθόρος δ' ὦν ὁ πλοῦτος, δυσφυλακτός ἐστι, καὶ ἂν ἱερός ἦ. νυνὶ
γε τοὶ πενήτατοι ἐστὶ τό ἐν Δελφοῖς ἱερόν. Strabo. IX. 420. The Delphian temple did not recover its opulence and credit, after Sylla's peculation: and the dispersion of the treasures of the most respected oracle in Greece was a circumstance favourable to the christian religion.

Of the imperial despotism, see Wotton's hist. of Rome, p. 117—120. Gravina, de Rom. imperio, §. 16. Of the Tribunician power of the Emperors, Reimar on Dio, p. 780.

Of the heroum Julium: Dio, p. 337. 454. 458.

Of the temples of Rome and Augustus; Noris. Cenot. Pis. 54.

Of the month of August; the SC. in Macrobius, i. 12.

Polybius, lib. 5. speaks of the Asiatic ἀρισκεία, τιμῶν τὸν εὐεργετὰ; θυγατρὶ καὶ ἑσπέρῃ. But the scene was often ridiculously contrasted. The provincial god was sometimes accused by his constituents of maladministration. Thus Appius Claudius, Cicero's predecessor, was accused of extortion at Rome by the very Cilicians, who had paid him divine honours, See Cic. ad Fam. III. 6—8, with Dr. Ross's commentary.

Of the altar at Lyons; Strabo, p. 192. Liv. epit. cxxxvii. Dio. xliv. fin.

Of the Arragonian altar; Quinçilian, vi. 3.

Of the Julium fidus; Augustus cited by Pliny, H. N. II. 23. and on his repairing the temples, Livy, iv. 10. Suet. in Aug. c. 29. 30. Tacit. Ann. ii. 59.

On the religious character of Hadrian, consult Scaliger on the Chron. of Euseb. p. 214—216.

FROM

XXXIII. P. 345. &c.

FROM THE ANCYRAN MONUMENT.

CVRIAM, ET CONTINENS EI CHALCIDICVM, TEM-
PLVMQVE APOLLINIS IN PALATIO CVM PORTICIBVS.
ÆDEM DIVI IVLII.—ÆDES IN CAPIFOLIO JOVIS FE-
RETRII ET JOVIS TONANTIS. ÆDEM QVIRINI. ÆDES
MINERVÆ ET JVNONIS REGINÆ ET JOVIS. LIBER-
TATIS IN AVENTINO. ÆDEM LARVM IN SVMMA
SACRA VIA. ÆDEM DEVM PENATIVM IN VELIA.
ÆDEM JVVENTATIS. ÆDEM MATRIS MAGNÆ IN
PALATIO FECI.—OCTOGINTA TEMPLA IN VRBE CON-
SVL—REFECI.—MARTIS VLTORIS TEMPLVM—TEM-
PLVM APOLLINIS.—IN TEMPLIS OMNIVM CIVITATVM
PELOPONNESI ET ASLÆ, VICTOR ORNAMENTA RE-
POSVI, QVÆ SPOLIATIS TEMPLIS, M. ANTONIVS, CVM
QVO BELLVM GESSERAM, PRIVATIM POSSEDERAT.
DONA AVREA IN AEDE APOLLINIS MEO NOMINE PO-
SVI — —

XXXIV. P. 323.

Propertius III. 5. This elegy is curious, as it expresses the religious opinions and sceptical speculations, which were fashionable in the age of Augustus.

Omina fausta cano: Crassos, cladesque piate:

Ite, et Romanæ consulite Historiæ. — —

Tam mihi naturæ libeat perdiscere mores,

Quis deus hanc mundi temperet arte domum:

Si ventura dies, mundi quæ subruat arces,

Purpureus pluvias cur bibit arcus aquas: — —

Sub terris si jura deum, et tormenta gigantum;

Tisip^h ones atro si furit angue caput:

Aut Alcæoniæ furia, aut jejunia Phinei;

Num rota, num scopuli, num sitis inter aquas:

An ficta in miferas escendit fatua gentes,

Et timor, haud ultra quam regus, esse potest.

Of the principles of Propertius, see lib. III. eleg. xx. 25. with the notes of Broukhufius.

Illic vel stadiis animum emendare Platonis

Incipiam, aut hortis, dux Epicure, tuis.

To the Epicureans mentioned page 321, and to the catalogue of them given by Fabricius, B. G. lib. III. c. 33. may be added C. Cilnius Mæcenas; whose voluptuous manners, and fantastic poems, seconded his influence as the prime-minister of Augustus, in favour of this sect.

Of the effects of the Epicurean philosophy on the prevalence of the gospel, consult Le Clerc. H. E. prolegom. II. 5. sect. 7.

XXXV. P. *354.

Univ. Hist. III. 500. &c. Confucius was born, according to Du Halde, 551 years before Christ, a year or two before the death of Thales: so that he must have been contemporary with Pythagoras and Solon, and somewhat earlier than Socrates. He gave early tokens of sagacity and virtue, and from his 15th year, devoted himself to the study of the ancient books. He married at 19, and was raised to successive places of eminence in the magistracy, which he accepted as means of promoting his intended reformation in religion and the state. In the 55th year of his age, he was raised to the highest posts in the kingdom of Lu; where, like Plato at the court of Syracuse, he made a temporary reform. Being divested of all his offices, and obliged to leave the court and kingdom; he resumed his former function, of a private sage, in which he met with better success. He had a vast number of disciples, whom he distributed into four classes, Ethical, Dialectic, Political; and Literary, whose office it was to write concisely and elegantly the principles and precepts of morality.

Confucius lived to finish his historical and philosophical works, and died in the 73d year of his age. His words, a few days before his death, betray some ambition of being the founder of a sect. He told his disciples with abundance of tears, ‘that the disorders which reigned in the empire had well nigh broke his heart’ and in the same melancholy tone, ‘Since kings refuse to follow my maxims, I am now no longer useful upon earth, and it is necessary that I should leave it.’

His

His works contain his collections from the ancient laws; and have titles expressive of their subjects.

1. The grand science, or school of adults.
2. The immutable medium.
3. Moral discourses.
4. The book of Mencius, finished by one of his disciples.
5. Of filial respect.
6. The science or school of children.

These books are next in authority to those ancient canonical or classical books, which the Chinese call by way of eminence the five volumes.

Father Noel, one of the missionaries into China, gave a latin version of the books of Confucius, printed at Prague, 1711, and Du Halde has given an extract of them in his description of the Chinese empire.

In one of their canonical books, the deity is styled the father of the people; he is represented, as watching over the government of the universe, and pleased with the virtue of mankind: as warning them by public calamities; and when those calamities are productive of reformation of manners, they are followed by acts of mercy and goodness.

What I have here extracted, presents the bright side of the Chinese system of natural religion. Reverse the medal, and you will find an idolatry more refined indeed, but not more rational, than that of the western polytheists.

Most of the Chinese sects pay a religious worship to the sun and elements, and to the souls of their ancestors, to whom they consecrate statues, altars, temples. This kind of worship is paid to deceased monarchs, to philosophers and other eminent persons, especially to Confucius. The Jesuites complied with this, as a civil or political worship, and permitted it to their proselytes. The Dominicans and other orders condemned it as idolatrous. This contest occasioned the total excision of christianity in the Chinese empire; where it possibly might have prospered, had it been taught in simplicity, and without such absurd compliances.

In 1707, the Pope's legate condemned the worship paid to the sun, to parents, and ancestors, &c. In 1720, the Pope's decree, being inconsistent with the laws and the usages of the Chinese

Chinese empire; the christian religion could no longer subsist there; it was soon after proscribed by several edicts, pursuant to which, more than 300 churches were destroyed, and 300,000 christians were deprived of their pastors, and of all prospect of seeing their religion restored.

The present imperial family, who are Tartars, follow the idolatry of their own nation, which differs little from that of China; except that the Lamas or Tartar-priests worship their deity (as the grosser Chinese idolaters worship their chimerical god Fo) under the shape of a young man, who they pretend never dies.

Confucius no where teaches the doctrine of a future state; and the immortality of the soul is not believed in China. Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*. xxiv. 19.

The sect of the literati, which was formed in the end of the xith century, and was established about the beginning of the xvth, are atheistic Spinozists, and, with much sublime expression, represent God as the invisible soul of the world, and nothing differing from nature. Du Halde, p. 658. *Burdei Analeceta*, p. 278. 350.

I conclude these collections, with a very recent, and I suppose authentic, account of the state of the christian religion in China; which serves to complete my argument, that even christianity cannot prevail by *human* power or wisdom; and therefore its prevalence in the Roman empire, in opposition to the power and policy of the imperial government, must be ascribed to a DIVINE PROTECTION and MIRACULOUS ENERGY.

C. Corn. Taciti opera, notis et dissertationibus illustravit Gabriel Brotier. Paris, 1776. 8vo. vol. V. p. 403.

‘ Hac nostra ætate, vivit Sinenſium imperator, imperii
‘ magnitudine, opum vi, et quod præſtantius eſt, politicis
‘ virtutibus, Veſpaſiano, Tito, Trajano, Antonino Pio, Mar-
‘ coque Aurelio non impar. Quæ hic de *Kien-Long*, optimo
‘ principe prædico, ea non incertis rumoribus, ſed a viris ac-
‘ cepi quos novi eſſe incorruptæ fidei, qui eum ſæpe vidère,
‘ ſæpe ſunt allocuti, qui multis abhinc annis in regia urbe Pe-
‘ kinenſi ipſoque imperatoris palatio degunt. Porro optimus
‘ ille princeps, Chriſtianis minime infeſtus, finit tamen chriſ-
‘ tianos, maxime in provinciis, vexari, diſcruciari; et ſingulis
‘ ferme annis exilio, morte, ſuppliciis, in eos ſævitum eſſe ac-
‘ cepimus.

‘ cepimus. Nec solita tantum, sed nova, et moribus Sinensibus
 ‘ vehementer repugnantia, tormenta adhibentur. Mandarinorum
 ‘ multi, neglecta Sinensium legum aequitate et clementia,
 ‘ in Christianos quicquid horridius imaginantur exercent.—
 ‘ Quod nunc sub *Kien-Long* viget, idem nostra aetate viguit
 ‘ sub ejus avo *Kan-hi*, maximo principe et Christianis amicis-
 ‘ simo. Idem viguit sub ejus patre *Yong-Tching*, bono prin-
 ‘ cipe, Christianis infenso, licet quosdam suo in palatio habe-
 ‘ ret, quos et honore et amicitia prosequeretur, &c.’

The learned commentator, though he adopts a false hypothesis respecting the Roman persecutions, draws this just conclusion from them. ‘ Haec inter tormenta, durat crescitque
 ‘ Christiana religio, quia propitius adest DEUS, Christianae
 ‘ religionis AUCTOR, innocentiae dator et ultor.’

F I N I S.

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